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JUNE 1958. VOL. X. NO. 6

Published monthly at 25 Haymarket London SW1
3s. per number (USA and Canada 75c). Postage per copy: Inland 6d., Foreign 4½d.
Yearly subscription (including postage) £2: USA and Canada $7.50: India 12 rupees
US and Canadian subscriptions may be entered at British Publications Inc.
30 East 60th Street New York 22. Second class mail privileges
authorised at New York, N.Y.

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François Bondy

The Sick Man of Europe is . . . Europe

Thoughts after Kennan

THE word "disengagement" is not to be found in the text of George Kennan's Reith lectures. Indeed, the term has, in its protean ambiguity, been linked with political tendencies and sentiments for which Kennan and such systematic D-planners as Hugh Gaitskell and Denis Healey have a scant regard. None of these men, for instance, believes that Western policy towards the Soviet Union should be based on "trust," as so many who agitate for "disengagement" do. For Kennan and his true supporters, the problem of "trust" or "confidence" is real enough: it pertains, however, not to Russia, but to Germany and, implicitly, to Europe.

To the question whether a united Germany should be allowed full freedom of action, Kennan replies:

"If Germany cannot be accorded reasonable confidence in these coming years then I would know of no promising solution to the entire problem of Europe. To assume that such confidence cannot be given is to cut ourselves off in advance from possibilities that may be vital to our very survival. If we are going to make so negative and so hopeless an assumption, let us be terribly, terribly sure that our judgment is drawn not from the memories and emotions of the past but from the soberest sort of attention to present realities."

And in an article in *Western World* (April), examining the arguments around the question of "disengagement," John Midgley, former *Times* correspondent in Bonn and now foreign editor of *The Economist*, wrote:

"In the end, these arguments will be determined by the degree of faith which the leaders of opinion in Europe have in the peoples of their own continent. Do they believe that Europe—not merely its western extremity but the whole continent west of Russia—has become incapable, if 'abandoned to its own devices,' of establishing a stable political life and pacific internal relationships of its own? If this is so, then the obvious answer is to keep the Russians in Central Europe in order to prevent the Americans from leaving."

It will be noticed that Kennan's and Midgley's framing of the question pretty much anticipates their answer: no one likes to disclose himself as having a suspicious nature, lacking in faith. But might not a European be allowed to enquire in *what* Europe the Europeans themselves and the great powers are supposed to have confidence? In view of the fact that national and political conflicts in Europe gave rise to two world wars, it is not exactly reassuring to be told now: "We will restore the Europe we had before, and hope that this time things will work out better."

When Don Quixote set forth to accomplish his heroic deeds, he made a helmet of cardboard and tested it with his sword. The helmet was cut in two. Whereupon he made a second helmet of cardboard, but refrained from testing it. That is one way of learning from history; but perhaps it is not the best way.

GERMAN Nationalists of the Right, as of the Left, have often hurled at Chancellor Adenauer the reproach that he is reluctant to trust the German nation as such, that he wants to tie the Germans so firmly to the

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West that they will no longer have the opportunity of pursuing a foreign policy of their own. And such "European" statesmen as Robert Schuman in France and the late de Gasperi in Italy were subject to sharp criticism in their own countries, for the very same reasons. But is it not significant that these three statesmen refused to trust their own peoples, and their own historical and political traditions? Meanwhile, the larger Europe to which the three Chancellors looked has failed to emerge; European national sovereignties are now held in check only by the relations among the world powers. But the question remains: how shall Europe organise itself after the eventual withdrawal of the non-European world powers?

Only yesterday it seemed that nothing but Hitler and his mania for power stood between Europe and a peaceful future. To-day, the argument runs, only the Soviet occupation forces, and the satellite régimes they maintain, stand between Europe and a peaceful future. But the position of a united Germany in a more or less neutralised Europe, consisting of the traditional national states, would be one of tremendous superiority; and so long as there was no supreme body for Europe, no common European policy, it would be unreasonable to rule out in advance the possibility of France's seeking once more an ally in the East to counter-balance the weight of Germany, however wisely Germany was ruled. The Western bloc and the Eastern bloc would then be replaced by alliances cutting across both. What, precisely, would have been gained?

Moreover: the tradition of East European nationalism, when directed against alien rule and dictatorship, appears primarily as a movement for freedom. But is it a movement for freedom in every respect? Would the re-establishment of these nations, as so many sovereign states, guarantee a peaceful settlement of all those national quarrels which so marked the East and Central European scene of yesterday?

Europe still bears within itself the seeds of disruption, for itself and for the world. The idea of restoring a Europe cleared of Russian and American troops, and to trust this Europe because "we have no other choice," simply cannot be accepted without further scrutiny. Indeed, examined more closely, this "confidence" so passionately appealed to is not so confident. The Europe that is to emerge from "disengagement" would not be distinguished from the Europe it supersedes by a new and better order. It is to differ from the Europe of the past *by being deprived of power* in world politics. Kennan envisages a future wherein the United States and the Soviet Union will still dispose of the full range of deterrent weapons, while the countries of continental Europe (and perhaps also Britain) will have only militias to maintain internal security and order. Europe strikes the world, and George Kennan too, for all his confidence, as an explosive continent which it would be wiser not to trust with highly explosive weapons.

Thus, the contemplated "liberation" of Europe is to be accompanied by a declaration of Europe's incompetence to play a rôle in world affairs. Kennan's warning against the atomic arming of the Bundeswehr as an irreversible and hence tragic decision* must be seen in the light of his broader conception —not so drastically formulated but unmistakable nevertheless—of a disarmed and neutralised Europe as in effect a ward of the Great Powers, this being the only kind of Europe from which Russia and America could afford to withdraw.

IN THE background of "disengagement"—and a not very distant background—the outline is beginning to take shape of a comprehensive large-scale American-Russian agreement, starting from those implicit rules and restrictions which, in the Cold War (and even in the "hot war" in Korea), determined Russo-American relations and set limits to the danger of a world conflict. But one implication of this agreement seems to pass unnoticed; it nullifies all hopes for the establish-

* In subsequent conversation with Kennan I had the impression that he does not despair of the reversibility of new military arrangements, even atomic ones.

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ment of a genuine "Atlantic community" as the potential nucleus of an eventual world government. In its stead, there would be a more or less permanent, uneasy stalemate between the two great atomic powers, with only fear and weakness in between.*

Western community or Russo-American atomic hegemony with all its tensions and conflicts? Have we Europeans, or some of us, still the power to make a choice between these two groping beginnings of two so different world orders?

At the very least, those who advocate "disengagement" ought to make it clear that there is a choice involved, whether Europe makes it or whether it is made *for* Europe. The policy of "disengagement" is credited with the ability to overcome the crisis in N.A.T.O. ("Disengagement is not an alternative to N.A.T.O., it is an alternative policy for N.A.T.O."—Denis Healey) and *also* to liberate the peoples of Central and Eastern Europe from the most oppressive features of Communist dictatorship. What Western policy could not achieve in its moment of confidence and strength (when America had an atomic monopoly) is now to be achieved by a gesture of weakness. And what Russia could not be made to yield in its moment of weakness, it is now expected to surrender in its moment of strength. As the French say: "the bride is too beautiful."

It is now generally forgotten that, in his Reith lectures, Kennan uttered a specific warning against a summit conference, as conflicting with the principles of sound, "old-fashioned," secret diplomacy. But the compound of interest in Kennan's ideas with pressure for a summit conference is precisely a part of that muddled "Kennanism" which is a peculiar political climate—the climate of European demobilisation. There is of course a great difference, and even a contradiction, between the real possibilities of a Russo-American agreement and the hysterical pressure for a summit conference, which is expected to work miracles—as though the Geneva Summit conference in the summer of 1955 were not enough to destroy one's belief in such miracles once and for all. But the very mood in Europe is in itself a proof that, at any sober summit, there is really only room for two. Looking ahead, therefore, one can say that the chances of the European and American halves of the Atlantic community growing together seem fewer than the chances for an American-Russian agreement about some kind of neutralised Europe. And it is disturbingly possible that this neutralised Europe will bear little or no resemblance to what at least some eloquent European spokesmen for "disengagement" have in mind.

IN THE last eight years European passivity and European activity alike have in the queerest fashion converged to weaken the Western community.

As to passivity: Paul Henri Spaak, as Secretary-General of N.A.T.O. has actually said that "There has probably never been an alliance which has realised its principal objective so completely." What he meant was that, at the decisive moment after the putsch in Prague, it saved Europe from a "Korean" fate. This is incontrovertible, and the great debate of those years between believers in the Atlantic pact and the neutralists, who were prepared to capitulate, was to the point. But the debate to-day between the "Atlanticists" and the "disengagers" has a different meaning—although behind Kennan and the D-planners are hidden very many Europeans who, like the earlier neutralists, are moved by nationalist aspirations, pacifist illusions, and even a readiness to capitulate.

The question that has now come to the fore is: Was the Atlantic pact a full partnership or was it primarily an American shield for a part of Europe between the Atlantic and the Mediterranean? Was it a genuine alliance

* But even such a compromise is not so sure a thing. Is a limitation of rivalry, and restrictions imposed by implicit or even explicitly formulated rules, compatible with the character of the Moscow régime? Does its vision of the world, and of the historical process as a whole, allow it to make such a compromise without subverting its own claim to legitimacy? This is not a question that anyone can answer dogmatically. But on the basis of past experience, it is a question one cannot dismiss as unreal.

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with mutual obligations or simply an American guarantee?

About a quarter of a million American troops are stationed in Europe. How many European soldiers stand beside them? It is enough to think of France, which to-day has only one division in West Germany under N.A.T.O. command, and has actually dissolved its élite (and American-equipped!) divisions, built up in ten years of hard work —even trained air crews have been assigned to the infantry in Algeria. France, it is clear, has had sufficient confidence in the American shield to devote itself entirely to the war in Algeria, and to leave the defence of France itself to the United States. The truth is that, in essentials, the West Europeans have relied on the United States for their defence, and that N.A.T.O. is the instrument, not of a partnership, but of a receivership. Nobody can maintain that America would not have preferred much stronger and self-reliant European allies—even if that would have meant less comfortable allies.

As to activity: France and Britain took an uncalculated risk in the Middle East at the moment of the Hungarian uprising. Ever since this event, one suspects that the ardent rhetoric about the Atlantic community as "a way of life" is premissed on growing doubts of its value as a military agreement expressing a specific minimum of political and strategic unity among the partners.

The more the national states of Europe—especially those with an imperial past—turn their forces, whether in desperation or confidence, to pursuing their own national policies along traditional lines, the more they weaken Europe as a whole. And to the same degree, they weaken the European-American partnership, without which the United States remains a world power, but not one of the European nations does. Thus, a supra-national Europe—even a Little Europe—as a clearing-house in which the national policies of the member states were subordinated in advance to the common interest, offered the only possibility of sustaining and carrying forward a European-American partnership. Perhaps it was really the rejection of the European Defence Community by the French National Assembly on 30th August, 1954, which undermined the Atlantic community. There was a good deal of derision in France at the time about John Foster Dulles' warning of a possible "agonising reappraisal" of American policy. The phrase was laughed off as a typical "Dulles bluff" and an empty threat. But the reappraisal was not a matter of one day or one year; it was a gradual and unavoidable shift of weight. And it has taken place—as Suez demonstrated. The United States may not have, ultimately, any real choice between Western Europe and Soviet Russia. But it does have freedom of action as between Western Europe and the non-European world. And it is gradually exercising that freedom more and more.

When the United States does now intervene in Europe, it is not as a senior partner, but as a power representing "the forces of order" which cannot tolerate local troubles in a part of the world which is of concern to it —not least because of its engagement in other parts of the world that might be affected. One need only mention Algeria to see the point. To-day Europeans have begun to notice that N.A.T.O. is becoming a kind of Spanish inn, where you eat and drink what you carry with you.

Meanwhile the Soviets have caught up with the American lead in armaments, and the American umbrella over Europe has sprung a leak. If, in the interval granted by history, no foundations were laid under its shelter, no house built, then—at least in this respect, and in the eyes of this European—America is not to blame.

FEW signs point at present to the emergence of a deeper and more comprehensive Atlantic community; but there are more and more indications that some agreement on a neutralised Europe is on its way. It may be worth while, then, to speculate on the prospects for Europe outside present political engagements, that is in "disengagement." The dispute between those who lay the blame on American leadership, and those who lay the blame on American failure to lead, is

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beside the point. So is the longing, particularly marked in Dean Acheson's writings, for a return to the less ambiguous position before 1950. That particular phase of the recent European past no longer provides a guide to the future.

The trend towards an American-Russian agreement over a more or less powerless and not wholly sovereign Europe, should make a special settlement for Germany, or rather a special status for Germany, superfluous. At least it is to be hoped that no distinction will be made between "engaged" and "disengaged" Europeans. A great and present danger would arise out of an unequal division of privileges, responsibilities, and burdens among the democratic European states; this inequality could generate new national hatreds and rivalries, and make of Europe simply a greater Balkans.

One of the few significant political achievements of post-war Europe has been Franco-German reconciliation and co-operation; perhaps even Socialists would admit that, in so far as it depended on him (and that was a good deal), Chancellor Adenauer acted in this respect like a statesman and that all Europe is indebted to him. For reconciliations and agreements of this kind there will still be opportunities in the relatively powerless Europe of the future. The first task will be to smooth out, as far as possible, the inequalities between France's imperial position and that of her European partners, which presupposes a settlement in Algeria. At the same time, one must be careful to avoid creating a new and more severe inequality between a France that belongs to the Western bloc and a Germany outside it. Co-operation between France and Germany, now functioning in so many fields, remains dependent on a basic equality of risks, of obligations, and of responsibilities, and it would not survive the destruction of this equality.

One should also consider the political and psychological conditions: so far as the readiness to engage in a Western coalition under American leadership is concerned, the citizens of the Federal Republic are decidedly more "Western" or "Atlantic" than the French. Even apart from the large Communist party and the extreme nationalists, various forms of neutralism and of *attentisme* play a large rôle in French politics. To neutralise Germany and to burden France with correspondingly greater responsibilities in the Western community is a policy which may be deduced from geography but which runs directly counter to the psychological climate in both France and Germany.

Balkans or Switzerland? Perhaps neither goal is likely to arouse enthusiasm in the citizens of that Europe which discovered the modern world, established it, and ruled it for so long. But Balkanisation will only be the fate of those who are themselves ready for it, and prefer to be a shrunken power rather than a small state. Switzerland—using the model in its broadest sense—implies the union of European cultures under a common democratic law, with adequate conventional military forces to deter aggression and the renunciation of those world-wide political ambitions which can only be satisfied by military power. To-day, when the hopes for a democratic Western community born of the war have faded, and with the new balance of power whose outlines have become clearer since Budapest and Suez, that is still an idea, and even an ideal.

Wherever the Atlantic pact has replaced the will of nations to defend themselves, instead of strengthening it, its usefulness has become questionable. As an American, George Kennan defined Europe as a "vacuum," and so it must appear to an observer without illusions. But as the Swiss journalist, F. R. Allemann, has written: "The military *disengagement* of the world powers would be a reasonable formula for an eventual agreement between East and West, and for a settlement of Central Europe's political problems, only if the vacuum which resulted were to be filled by the political and military *engagement* of those living within it."

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John Braine

Lunch with J. B. Priestley

Two Gentlemen from Bradford

WHEN I stood in the Albany I had already formed my own mental picture of J. B. Priestley. The Albany was an appropriate frame for the picture, because the Albany doesn't exist. Green, white, summer-smelling, and quiet, it bore no relation to any place I had ever known. And, in any case, it had been written about too much to have any connection left with the real world. It was the setting for a Rattigan play, it was the address which Algy Moncrieff gave whilst masquerading as Ernest Worthing, it was the residence of Lord Macaulay (which is as absurd as saying that here lived English History). Above all, it was the sort of place where I myself could never afford to live; or, at least, where I could never permit myself to live even had I the opportunity, for I should enjoy it too much. I used to walk past the Albany often when I was a freelance journalist in 1951; I knew then that Mr. Priestley lived there,* but only as I know that the world is round and travels at the speed of an express train, from hearsay. I couldn't link up writing and the Albany and Bradford in a logical sequence. And I still couldn't, some six years after.

The reason for my being there was that I had mixed feelings about Mr. Priestley as a writer. I wanted to sort out those feelings. To begin with, I wanted to investigate the legend of Jolly Jack, the successful Bradford businessman who dealt in words instead of wool. I'd heard various anecdotes about him in this rôle, of course. All of them classify him at one place, 942.74, to use the Dewey number for Yorkshire. Every writer I've met has a different Priestley anecdote; but they are all, to the point of monotony, the same. In each of them a prosperous, scowling, huffing and puffing creature speaking in Home Counties Stage Northern (Lancashire with a cold in the head) throws down the gauntlet of materialism and, chuckling brutally, goes on his way to churn out best-sellers. I have no doubt at all that these stories are untrue; whatever grain of fact may be contained in them is probably due to Mr. Priestley at some moment being ironical and proclaiming in loud ringing tones precisely what he didn't believe. But a relaxed and irreverent irony is what few Englishmen (particularly Southern intellectuals) can understand. I personally have never forgotten the shocked look on the face of a children's publisher to whom I spoke in praise of horror comics which, I said, induced interesting and æsthetically valuable neuroses besides giving the children an accurate picture of the world in which they were going to live. The colloquial use in England of "seriously," meaning, *We've all had our fun now chaps, let's be owlish and portentous, this is no joke,* is quite sufficient to prove my point.

Even if untrue, however, these anecdotes represent to some extent the public view of Mr. Priestley. And it's possible that they tell us as much about him, and the world he lives

* For about one-fifth of the year, he informs me.

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in, as the true ones. Each is one of the bricks, or rather stones, which have gone into the erection of his public *persona*. If *personæ* were buildings, mine would be a small sooty Bradford mill with a modern wing in Vita-Glass and concrete; Priestley's would be more like Salts Mills at Shipley Glen, huge and imposing against a background of trees and green fields, unmistakably of the Industrial Revolution, but unmistakably also, because designed all of a piece and influenced by Renaissance architecture, belonging to a wider world than the West Riding.

I was first made aware of Mr. Priestley as a personality from an anarchist literary review called *Darts*. In its pages figured, among others, Bob Gravy, Philip Townwasp, and Stevie Suspender. And Mr. Priestley was there too; he played a prominent part in the serial *In Search of the White Goddess*. It was he who came crashing through the Sacred Wood in the final instalment, bellowing disconsolately "This isn't bilberry pie and Wilfred Hirst, laaad!" It occurred to me then that he was one of the few living writers big enough to be satirised; and one of the few living writers too, with any chance of catching the White Goddess.

One of the reasons for his existing so emphatically as a person was that he had roots. He was not simply a regional writer—though I don't myself think that's a bad thing to be—but it isn't possible to imagine him as coming from any other city than Bradford. At the time that I began to discover him as a writer I'd left Bradford for London and was for the first time in my life beginning to think of myself as a Bradford writer. In fact, I was extremely annoyed whenever he wrote about Bradford as being his town; I felt, rather unfairly, since he wrote about it first, opened up the market so to speak, that he was muscling into my territory. Not that this was anything but an irrational feeling; we're not removal firms and there's room for us both.

The truth is that the fact of us both coming from Bradford made my feelings about Mr. Priestley quite different from my feelings about any other professional writer. Bradford —and I'm not pretending to think otherwise than subjectively and personally—is a city which more than any other in England is dominated by the success ethos. There isn't much room there for the writer or, indeed, for the artist of any kind. One mustn't oversimplify; but behind every myth, behind every popular fallacy, there is a solid truth. *One of the low*, Mr. T. S. Eliot wrote once, *upon whom assurance sits like a silk hat upon a Bradford millionaire*. . . . The solid truth behind the popular conception of a Bradford full of bouncingly vulgar materialists is that it is a city dedicated to making money out of the weaving of wool. This is a hard and chancy way of making a living, since in the end it's not just a question of luck or cunning but of being the master of a great deal of technical knowledge and not making one mistake.

I remember meeting a woolman recently who asked me what my job was. "I write," I answered. "I don't mean that," he said impatiently. "I know that you've written a book. I mean what do you do for a living? *What do you work at?*" This attitude is fairly typical; Bradford isn't a city of illiterate boors, but it doesn't possess a leisured and cultivated middle class, and never has done. You are, if you live in Bradford, either very rich or else just above the subsistence level. With few exceptions, whatever money there is in textiles goes into the pockets of those whom, gulping a little, I can only term the boss class.

A writer coming from this background is bound either to revolt against its standards, to become rootless and metropolitan, his only contact with any sort of community being according to politics, or else to accept its standards, to some extent, to try to defeat Bradford at its own game. That is, as far as he is able; there are at least a hundred men in Bradford with ten times Mr. Priestley's income, and two hundred more with twenty times mine. Not that either of us gives a damn; there is nothing simpler than becoming rich. If you passionately want to be rich, if you are prepared to spend most of your waking hours thinking about wool—or any

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other commodity from concrete to chocolate —then you will inevitably acquire a Rolls-Royce, a hunting-lodge in the Highlands, a villa in the Bahamas, and all the rest of it.

HOWEVER, though Mr. Priestley is not a millionaire, he wasn't by Bradford standards a failure. And he still is, and always will be, a Bradford man. He hasn't lived there since his university days, he doesn't re-visit it regularly, he doesn't write exclusively about Bradford or, indeed, the West Riding. He is an international writer, a fact which should never be forgotten. I don't mean that he writes about what Amis and Uncle Matthew call Abroad, but simply that Abroad reads him.

But—and this is perhaps one of the main reasons that Abroad reads him—he remains in the best sense a provincial. He is a provincial in a way which very few English writers are. For behind every word that he writes is one place, that black stone city in the Pennines where happiness stopped in 1914, where the workings of capitalism can be seen quite nakedly and without glamour—old, fat, and ugly on the horsehair consulting couch. There is more to it than that, of course. The old fat woman, her health broken down with high living, is still a human being, still has as much right to be loved as the old-age pensioner starving to death in an attic. And Bradford still has the right to be loved. Places aren't simply names on the map, places are combinations of individual people (the Registrars will prove it) and geography and history. We cannot say Dear City of Zeus until we say Dear City of Cecrops. We cannot speak even for England, let alone the world, until we have spoken for Bradford—or Wolverhampton or Leicester or Swansea or Barnsley.

If a man is influenced by a place, though, the influence isn't necessarily all on the credit side. Was it possible that Mr. Priestley was too much the Bradford man who'd done well for himself, too much the successful word manufacturer? For, it seemed to me, there wasn't any other way of explaining his extraordinary unevenness as a writer. The professional competence was always there, nothing that he writes is unreadable or unactable. But in some of his works, it's almost as if he's parodying himself. Again and again there turn up the stock characters, the stock situations, the stock ideas once epitomised rather neatly by a reviewer in the phrase, "There must be Something somewhere if only we could find it." What puzzled me was that the same man could be the author of, for example, both *Time and the Conways* and *I Have Been Here Before*. When I compared the latter with *An Inspector Calls*, which says something about the whole human condition, and says it nobly, I become still more puzzled.

For most authors are consistent throughout; if you dislike one of their works, you dislike them all. I don't admire *Across The River And Into The Trees*, but I accept it as Hemingway—in bottom gear perhaps, but still Hemingway. *Across The River And Into The Trees* and *The Old Man And The Sea* were written by the same man; but it's almost impossible to believe that, to choose another instance, the author of that heavy-handed piece of whimsy, *Jenny Villiers*, and of *Bright Day*, which has stirred my envy and admiration with its richness and poignancy each of the half-dozen times I've read it, have more than a nodding acquaintance.

But the analogy with Hemingway was, I recognised the moment I'd made it, false and unfair. It would have been legitimate if the volume of their works had been equal; but the fact was that purely on a quantitative basis Mr. Priestley had succeeded more often than Hemingway; he'd aimed at the target at least twenty times more often, having twenty times more ammunition. Consequently he'd hit it more often; and not being an academic critic, why should I care about his misses?

In any case, the most important reason for my visit was simply that I wanted to pay him my respects, I wanted to meet a writer from whose work, whatever reservations I might have about some of it, I'd derived an enormous amount of pleasure. And from him I'd learned more than from any other living author. There are certain rules-of-thumb, sometimes crystallised memorably as in Henry James' *Dramatise, Dramatise*, and

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sometimes hardly capable of formulation except through a highly personal shorthand, which every writer must acquire for himself. Most of mine were taken, or rather absorbed, from Mr. Priestley. This doesn't mean that I am of his, or any, school; it does mean that I'm in his debt.

When I found his apartments, our meeting was something of an anti-climax. For he looked exactly as I had anticipated from a thousand photographs and caricatures. Then I noticed something which all the pictures had missed: his face, unquestionably old though it is, with all the lines and creases that one might expect for his age if not a few extra, nevertheless has a look of youthfulness. (When later he visited me at my home, my wife, a far more acute observer than myself, commented on this also. "He's the oldest of the lot, and he'd never win a beauty competition, but he looks the youngest," she said.) This youthfulness isn't physical or spiritual; it is, I think, a bonus awarded to those who have thought deeply, about better things than earning a living or acquiring money and power.

After lunch—and a very good lunch it was—we settled down to the interview. What follows is as accurate a transcription of what was actually said as my home-made shorthand system and faulty verbal memory will allow.

*

Braine: The 1914 War was, as you make clear again and again in your writings, the most important event in your life. Apart from a competent but trivial story, *The Town Mayor of Miraucourt*, you've never written about it otherwise than incidentally. The 1914 War was so terrible—sometimes even I have nightmares about it—and so shattering in its effects that it seems to me a challenge which no novelist should refuse. Our own city has never really recovered from the Battle of the Somme—there's a theme for you ready-made. Why on earth haven't you used your experience?

Priestley: I'm not conscious of having deliberately avoided writing about the 1914 War. Probably during the earlier 'twenties I wanted to forget about it and anyhow I wasn't writing fiction then. Later, when I had had the necessary experience as a novelist, a number of very good books about the War had made their appearance, many of them saying just what I would have said. Incidentally, I wonder if you remember my account of the battalion reunion in *English Journey*? If you don't know the book, you might take a look at that chapter sometime. You'll find your War there.

Braine: I think that until recently there's been a division in the mind of most critics between best-sellers and what for want of a better phrase we'll call serious novels. I mean that the general idea has been that if a book's popular it's not to be taken seriously, it must be trash. I remember a friend of mine saying how shocked he was when he saw you among the contributors to *Horizon*. He's changed his mind since then—that's precisely my point—but in those days best-seller was a dirty word. Now there are signs—I'll quote my own instance and Kingsley Amis' if I may—that this attitude is changing. I think myself that it was always a bad thing—do you agree with me? And haven't you suffered from it?

Priestley: Yes. "Best-seller" is a trade term and should not be used by critics as if it had some literary significance. Some bad books have been best-sellers, but then so have all the world's best books too. I think it was only after the First World War that critics began worrying about majority and minority reading publics, highbrow and lowbrow, best-sellers and works of literature. Remember, I grew up before that War, and so to this day I assume—sometimes rightly, sometimes wrongly—that it is possible to address a large audience and still be reasonably intelligent. The books I published before *The Good Companions* were generally praised in the weekly reviews. Then by accident—for what I wanted to do was to write a long *picaresque* novel and neither my publishers nor the booksellers, who only subscribed three thousand copies, thought it would be popular—I brought out a novel that everybody's aunt wanted to buy and read, so that six months

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after publication it was selling five thousand copies a day—and in the sight of the weekly reviews I stopped being a promising literary man and became an adroit Bradford business man. Since then, sometimes I have been "in" with the clever reviewers and sometimes "out," and now I've stopped knowing or caring. I like writing what I want to write, without much concern either for the trade or the building up of a literary reputation. If I'm left out of those solemn lists and assessments of contemporary English authors, it serves me right, partly for doing so many different things and also for not caring a damn.

Braine: Personally I think of you as a playwright first and foremost. I've never seen any of your plays staged professionally, but I've seen quite a few extremely good amateur productions at Bradford and Bingley. *Johnson Over Jordan* at the Bradford Civic Playhouse made the greatest impact. I saw it longer ago than I care to remember; what's important to me about it is that it marks the first time that I took you seriously as a writer. One scene sticks in my mind; the dance of the office workers. There were no words used, so in a way it proved nothing about your ability as a playwright. And it proved everything, because you knew the right place for that dance, because it was an integral part of the play and not just a decoration. I wish you'd have it produced again.

Priestley: And I wish it was as easy as that to decide to have a play produced. But—with all due respect to the Civic—if you have never seen any of the original London productions of my plays, then you haven't seen them as I'd like you to have seen them. And remember, as I kept saying in *The Art of the Dramatist*, plays are not meant to be read but to be experienced in the theatre. But I can't see *Johnson Over Jordan* being done again. It would cost—and lose—a more than small fortune. One of my difficulties now in the theatre—and it explains why I no longer have the interest I had—is that most of the people I worked with in the 'thirties and 'forties, people I enjoyed working with, are now out of the theatre.

Braine: I'd be interested to know which of your own plays you like the best.

Priestley: I must have had about thirty plays produced, and we haven't time to start running through them. I've always enjoyed writing plays more than writing novels, perhaps because with a play you spend more time smoking than actually writing. But with our system of production, there's a good deal of luck attached to a play, good luck or bad. Just after the War I wrote two plays within a very short time. One was *The Linden Tree*, and it was a smash hit. The other was *Home Is To-morrow*, and it was a flop. Yet in my opinion there was nothing to choose between these two plays as pieces of writing. The critics and playgoers were ready for one and not for the other. One opened at the right time in the right theatre, the other at the wrong time in the wrong theatre. I have never liked this Monte Carlo element in the theatre, and would have been happier as a dramatist in countries where it didn't exist. I am a writer, not a showman. In fact I dislike showmen and have never been happy with the "show business" side of the theatre.

Braine: The silliest thing I ever did myself was to write a play. It lost me five years of my writing life one way and another, and nearly lost me my life altogether. Still, there must be one play at least that you like better than the others.

Priestley: No, I don't think there is. But I'll confess to having a special fondness for things of mine like *Time And The Conways* and *Bright Day*, in which I feel I have solved some rather tricky mechanical problems concerned with the time element in them.

Braine: I do agree with you about *Bright Day*, which is your very best novel, especially in the Bruddersford bits.

Priestley: Well, that's what you say. Somebody else would say *Angel Pavement*. Somebody else would say I was at my best only in autobiography, in books like *English Journey* and *Midnight On The Desert*. I've been told so often that only some particular book

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or play has justified my existence, that I've lost interest in the subject.

Braine: As long as a lot of people all like different ones among your books or plays, that seems to me quite a satisfactory state of affairs. You have a public for each work. Would you tell me—and this has some connection with the question of output—whether you believe that writing should always be a full-time job? I'm sure that it should be myself, by simple analogy with any other profession.

Priestley: I think you ought to make it a full-time job—you have the right temperament, the right attitude. But I also think that a great many young writers, by no means without talent, would be happier not trying to earn a living with their writing. Delicate temperaments and talents are better off as amateurs. A professional writer should be tough and copious.

Braine: There's a lot of talk now about the necessity of being "engagé." Do you think that all writers at this point in history should be committed, that they should try with every word that they write to change the face of the world?

Priestley: No, I don't. Indeed, I think it's wrong to lay down rules for writers, as you're in danger of doing. Some writers would be failing in their duty if they weren't committed. Others might ruin themselves by being committed.

Braine: I've not always agreed with your being committed. Sometimes the result is magnificent. You've never done anything better than *An Inspector Calls*—which is thoroughly an example, a classic example of what is meant—or what should be meant—by the word. But *They Came To A City*, to my mind, is a classic example of how not to do it. In the first, real people expressed a universal truth; in the second, abstract ideas were stated by puppets.

Priestley: They Came To A City was a play written for a specific period—the middle of the war. It said something that needed to be said at that time, when, by the way, it was enormously successful. I try to discourage people from producing it now. Incidentally, aren't you in danger of being rather negative in your criticism, of worrying too much about work you don't like? A great deal of what I wrote just before the War, during the War, and immediately after it, was a kind of journalism, topical stuff, often in response to some special request. I'm not ashamed of it—in the same circumstances I'd do the same again—but you people who grew up during the War mustn't judge me entirely by what you read or saw of my work then.

Braine: I have the impression that you're more highly valued abroad than here. How far would you say that this is true?

Priestley: It is in the theatre, certainly. In any given year plays of mine are being performed in twelve to fifteen different countries. Sometimes before they are produced here. For example, *Take The Fool Away* had its world première at the Burgtheater in Vienna and has now been played all over Central Europe, but it has not been done yet in London and may never be done here. The truth is, that although I worked so long in the theatre here, not only writing plays but helping to run producing companies and playhouses themselves, so that really I've had a great deal of theatrical experience, I've never lived entirely in the world of the theatre, as many playwrights do. I've never really felt quite at home in our West End Theatre, have always felt more in my own sort of atmosphere in the theatre abroad. The English have a natural genius for the theatre, but it's never occupied the right place in our society. It's partly due to the fact that the Englishman never really faces the fact that he has to live an urban life, he's always on his way to the country. So England is a land of wonderful country houses and enchanting villages and terrible towns.

Braine: Frequently I'm told that the novel is dead. The people who tell me this generally add that television will replace it. I'm sure you know all the arguments—it's uneconomic to write novels, *Admass* doesn't like them,

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the form is outdated anyway.... What do you think?

Priestley: Any idea that the novel is dead is rubbish. But the contemporary English novel could be much better, though. Very reluctantly I must confess that the best American new fiction seems to be better than ours. Most of ours isn't big enough, not sufficiently broadly based. It's too much on one level, too much about one class of people and one style of life. I want to see novels showing the interdependence of different classes and styles of life, big novels that can show us the whole *tangle* of things. I liked your novel because it did to some extent look at the tangle of things and within its limits was unusually candid and truthful. But it wasn't big enough. I wanted to know more about the other people in that town. You didn't make me live in the place.

•

And there, it now being four o'clock, the interview had to end. I had, to my own satisfaction, exploded the legend of Jolly Jack, the Hard Headed Yorkshireman. I never even saw him that afternoon, because he doesn't exist.

What he had told me about the difference between the reception of his plays in England and abroad had confirmed me even more decidedly in my opinion that he is of all living writers the most undervalued. If now the English literary Establishment is taking him seriously it is mainly because of a volume of articles bearing the imprimatur of *The New Statesman*. And this just is not good enough. If any Continental writer had succeeded on so many different levels as Mr. Priestley, we should now be seeing articles in all the best reviews with titles like *Homage to Jacques Priestley*. And if his name had been Brecht, there would have been no trouble about staging *Johnson Over Jordan*, either.

Mr. Priestley's standing with (to oversimplify grossly) the English intellectuals doesn't matter to him personally; so long as he can make a living by what he wants to write, he can afford to laugh off Leavis and Co. Indeed, to spend one moment's thought on his critics is a waste of his writing time. And in the long run (unavoidable cliché coming up), the verdict of the common reader, which he won't be there to hear, is the deciding one. But here and now, there is the question not only of ordinary justice but of the preservation of critical standards. Talking once with a young novelist, I mentioned Mr. Priestley. He was instantly dismissed as not being worth seriously discussing. I discovered later that the novelist's acquaintance with Mr. Priestley had been confined to skimming *The Good Companions* at the age of sixteen.

This would be of no importance if the person concerned weren't representative of a thousand others, none of whom lives in a vacuum. And it seems to me that there's something wrong with English criticism when so much fuss is made about the authors of *Look Back In Anger* and *The Uses of Literacy* and *Lucky Jim* and come to that, *Room At The Top*, and so little about the author of *An Inspector Calls* and *Bright Day* and *Time and the Conways*.

As he himself indicated, he's personally to blame for this. Had he confined himself to any one form, had he cut his output by two-thirds, he would now be just as well off financially and brightly and shiningly culturally O.K., even though his actual achievement would have been far smaller. In the U.S.A., farmers are paid subsidies *pro rata*, for not raising crops and livestock. Could it be that some of our literary arbiters are inclined to reward underproduction too?

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Harry T. Moore

An Earnest Hemingwaiad

Sing, Goddess, if you must, but be polite:
We mourn for Slugger Hemingway tonight.
The Oak Park Mauler had a big first round,
But now he stretches gasping on the ground.
Clean visioned when he started his career,
He punched out prose demotic, terse, and clear,
Each sentence plain American and rough,
The speech of those who at least pretend they're tough.
For literary ancestors take Twain
And Ringgold Lardner, with their brisk disdain
Of parlour language, genteel and sedate,
Which their coarse idiom helped exterminate:
Twain's Huckleberry Finn and Lardner's stories
Were body blows to stun linguistic tories.

When young, the hopeful, striving Hemingway
Learned journalese the Kansas City way;
And the fading slugger, Sherwood Anderson,
Taught Hem some tricks and then was turned upon:
He showed the Mauler how to dodge and swing,
And for reward was dunked in torrents of spring.
The aspiring champ next trained with Gertrude Stein,
Who kept the hypertense palooka in line;
And Ezra Pound helped curb the youngster's antics
With sharp advice on the footwork of semantics.
And when Hem wrote of problems in our time,
He started on his tantalising climb
Up that forbidding, high, and lonely wall
From the top of which the Humpty Dumpties fall:
For he who quickly mounts too soon forgets
That the same sun which rises also sets.

Yes, in the 'twenties Hem was the coming champ,
And imitators thronged into his camp.
They copied Ernest's every little trick,
Though he alone could make the style click.
He spawned a school that at its roaring best,
As Eastman said, wore false hair on its chest.
And yet, for all its loud ineptitude,
The school had caught one thing, a widespread mood:

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A host of exiles, disillusioned cubs,
Left midwest cornfields for exotic pubs.
Already Hem, war vet and refugee,
Had penned their Iliad and Odyssey.
His book imported to our blushing shores
The left-bank carousel of drunks and whores,
And modern Fisher Kings with blood-tipped spears,
Castrati fighting back their absinthe tears.
Bullfighters, too, whose tight green sexual pants
Drove high-born, bobbed-haired ladies to romance;
And men sans women, keen to fish again
In the big two-hearted river of Michigan.
Hem even wrote the first good gangster tale
Before the films made thugs the dream-boat male.
And when war books were not yet in the fashion,
Hem made them so with his neat tales of passion;
The reading public fell before the charms
Of lovers making their farewell to arms.
This novel hit again the modern note,
The woman speaking through a tightened throat:
"You've had no other girls? You're lying now,
But keep on lying, darling"—this is how
The love-raked nurse talks to her paramour:
"Oh darling, you've a lovely temperature!"
But this compelling novel, like good wine,
Requires no bush, no advertising sign,
For in this century of super-wars,
It makes the other battle novels bores.

But in writing it, Hem almost shot his wad,
For afterward his habit was to nod:
And now for his lost talent there's bereavement.
A few short stories pieced out his achievement,
A few good tales that lurked yet in his pen;
But his novels seemed by nature's journeymen.
Two tales of Africa he'd still to tell,
Of Kilimanjaro's high and snow-topped hell,
And Macomber, who lost his shaking life
When he redeemed himself before his wife.
And a few shorter stories kept the pace,
The best set in a clean, well-lighted place.
Hem's bull-fight book of death by afternoon,
The author's first nonfiction honeymoon,
Became a minor classic of its kind,
Though the old lady left the bulls behind
When she inquired in blank astonishment
Just what those words with the four letters meant.
The green hills book of Africa was no success,
For most reviewers made a bloody mess
Of trying in dense jungles to pursue
The magic and elusive gold kudu.
And then the novels, the remaining four:
How paltry after what had gone before!
The once-great slugger, trim and disciplined,

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Was getting punch-drunk, heavy, short of wind.
A lively *Cosmo* piece that had a plot
Concerning Cuba, smuggling, and a yacht,
Was stretched beyond its strength to tell the story
of hard-boiled Harry Morgan's spurious glory:
This earnest man, this Bogart-Garfield of
The fishing boat, fake cargo, and hot love.
By now, one fact was emerging like a crescent:
This author's main ideas stayed adolescent.
And then the next book with its tolling bell
Rang out a fading talent's further knell.
The earlier Ernest would have told this tale
In a hundred pages, neat and on the nail.
The people here go in the cave, and then
Go out and in, go in and out again,
With all the weary regularity
Of their reciting of the word *obscenity*.
Occasionally the author hits his stride,
The death of Sordo on the mountainside,
And the murder of the fascists in the town,
Though so much sadism weighs the story down.
And as for ideology, or where
The hero stands, the book does not declare:
For him the Spanish war becomes a jag
Of cuddling "Rabbit" in the sleeping bag.
And though at last Roberto blows the bridge,
His grandpa stymies him upon the ridge.
But at least from all the phony prose he's free:
"I obscenity in your obscenity"!

The second war found Hem upon the scene
To write hack stuff for *Collier's* magazine;
We all now hoped the talent wasn't blunted.
But then, instead of the masterpiece we wanted,
We got a colonel with a cracking heart
Who tore the winning generals all apart,
Then crossed the river to the farther trees,
Where there was no more fondling of the knees
Of his extremely young and hot contessa.
She had become both Stella and Vanessa
To ageing Colonel Cantwell, whose banal
Complaints would overflow the Grand Canal.
He called her Daughter as he stroked her breast
And relished this display of fake incest:
A way to be emotionally thrifty,
Unharnessing such notions when you're fifty;
Though for this colonel, love so barmecide
Turned out to be a form of suicide.
And Hemingway himself was sprawled supine
While all the critics counted up to nine,
But just before his seconds tried removal,
He bounced back up again to win approval.
His brave old Cuban with his tattered fish
Was at last the critics' and the readers' dish,

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Though some declared this fable was the thing
Another writer once called "Jesusing":
Hem went from heroism dramatised
To heroism sentimentalised,
And old admirers once more had to pine
For the Hemingway of 1929.
Today if you've a story, drool it, sir,
And that'll help you toward the Pulitzer.
As for a grander, more exalted height,
Where Lewis and O'Neill are on sight,
Remember it was climbed once by the truck
Of Mrs. Pearl Sydenstriker Buck.
And there was also William Faulkner's rise
From Popeye's corncob to that Nobel Prize;
Americans get up there, with their hustle,
At younger ages than a Shaw or Russell.
But as his old admirers surely know,
Our Hemingway seemed punched out long ago,
Though now and then he throws a line to rope us
In to expect that promised magnum opus,
The time when finally our ageing boy
Lives up to his boasts and tangles with Tolstoy.
Alas, each day that day seems farther off,
And now when we think of Hemingway we doff
Our hats, and though he might regard us dopes,
We grieve for shrivelled prose and blasted hopes.
So, sing, Goddess, if you must, but be polite:
We mourn for Slugger Hemingway tonight. . . .

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LETTER FROM PARIS

Algeria Seen from Chez Lipp

Through a Glass, Clearly

CHEZ LIPP—to which some of the French now attach the Anglo-Saxon apostrophe "s" —is a café-restaurant on the Boulevard St. Germain which has stood unmoved like a Gibraltar of bourgeois respectability through the battering of the successive waves of Existentialism, jitterbugging, blue jeans, and horsetail hair-do's. Lipp's must have been Alsatian in some distant past, for its specialities are all from Alsace —cervelat sausage, sauerkraut, and Munster cheese—and it serves some of the best beer in Paris, though this is not saying much. However, ever since I have known the place, which I am appalled to realise is thirty years, it has been directed by a family of Auvergnats, from the Massif Central which traditionally provides Paris with its café keepers, including M. Boubal, who operates the more internationally known Café de Flore just across the street from Lipp's.

Lipp's is a much more steadfast institution than the Flore, which has not been immune to change. "We have had three complete shifts of clientèle since you used to come here," Pascal, the Flore's most famed waiter, told me when I returned to Paris in 1950 after an absence of ten years, "and each has been for the worse." Still he does not regret the loss of the Existentialists. "The Existentialists," he confided, "were very meagre tippers, and the people who came to stare at them were even worse." To-day the Flore has been so thoroughly invaded by over-handsome young men addicted to bright red waistcoats, that most of the other customers have gone away and the locking-up routine includes a precaution certainly not necessary in my pre-war occupancy of the place, a poking about under the *banquettes* to make sure that none of the customers are allowing themselves to be shut up in the café, with what purpose I cannot imagine.

While the Flore has been undergoing the effects of this small-scale *Volkswanderung*, Lipp's has changed neither its décor, its menu, nor its customers, and the only evolution in its habits over the years was the reluctant abandonment, before the war, of the house rule that unaccompanied ladies, no matter how venerable and respectable, could not be served. Lipp's has always been the hangout of politicians, particularly after evening debates in the Chamber or the Senate, institutions which, being less solid than Lipp's, have now undergone a metamorphosis and have acquired the stiff and unsatisfactory names of National Assembly and Council of the Republic respectively. However, their clientèle also has not changed much, so some of the legislators who will be found in Lipp's after a thirsty political meeting hoisting a *sérieux*, which holds two glasses of beer in one—no one any longer calls for a *formidable*, which contains four—are the same individuals I used to see there before the war, in many cases testimony to the fact that it is very nearly impossible for a French politician to compromise himself too thoroughly for re-election.

Lipp's has become more than ever the place to pick up political gossip. Sometimes a clout on the head can be picked up also, as on the occasion when the plug-uglies of Maître Biaggi's neo-Fascist league, after breaking up a Radical-Socialist meeting in the neighbourhood, repaired to Lipp's for refreshment, and found that some of their recent adversaries had had the same idea. The battle was resumed on these new grounds, but Lipp's numerous, dignified, and solidly-built *maîtres d'hôtel*, most of whom are brothers, transformed themselves instantaneously into bouncers, and the unpleasantness was quickly ended. Ordinarily Lipp's is the scene of more decorous manifestations, like ex-Premier Félix Gaillard's midnight snack to celebrate simultaneously his thirty-eighth birthday and his wringing of a vote of approbation from the National Assembly.

Lipp's might seem a rather distant vantage

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point from which to cover the Algerian war—although several more formal wars of my acquaintance were reported from headquarters not much less removed from the front. But the fact that Lipp's is thronged nightly with politicians, political journalists, lobbyists, and occasionally even with some of the men who really run the country, the top civil servants and the *chefs de cabinet* who manipulate the ministers for whom they are ostensibly working, makes it a place where a good deal of information can be picked up, even about Algeria. As a coverer of North Africa from behind a stein of beer at Chez Lipp, I have lately been impressed by the fact that roughly the same dramatis personæ which earlier in the day hang out around the Palais Bourbon, another name for the building with its back resolutely turned to the centre of Paris in which the Deputies do their debating, turn up in Lipp's in the evening. And, in these surroundings, they give one the impression of being very much better informed than before sunset—though perhaps it is simply that they are more candid.

IT WAS on the morning after one long discussion of North Africa in Lipp's that I read, with a little effort, for my previous night's exertions as a war correspondent in the trenches of the Boulevard St. Germain had ended at two o'clock, an observation of Tunisia's chief of state and chief executive, Habib Bourguiba, which opened up a line of reflection of great simplicity which nevertheless does not seem to have attracted the attention of many of the persons currently dealing with the Algerian conflict in Paris. The remark had been made to a highly competent French journalist, Jean Daniel, who is doing a stint of duty in Tunis for *l'Express*, a well-informed weekly of Mendèsian leanings. M. Daniel reported that Bourguiba had said to him, "You are living in the present. I am obliged to look into the future."

There is nothing particularly startling about this except that, while it has occurred to Habib Bourguiba and also, rather evidently, to Sultan Mohammed V of Morocco to look into the future, there is no indication that many Frenchmen have done so, unless you count the imaginary future which they would like to encounter in North Africa. Perhaps it would be more accurate to say the imaginary futures, since every French party, not to say every French politician, envisages a different one, the chief point they have in common being that none of them is ever likely to come about. There is little chance that the actual future will be shaped by men whose visions are fixed on the impossible, but it may be that it could be influenced if Frenchmen would join Bourguiba and Mohammed V in considering the consequences of at least one realisable form the future might take—a completely independent Algeria, or at least one no less independent than other nations, none of which, including the greatest, is completely independent nor can expect to be as long as it is compelled to share the same planet with others. If Frenchmen are avoiding this prospect, it is no doubt because they do not like it and do not want to admit it, but if they could bring themselves to face this ugly possibility, they might discover, perhaps with somewhat of a shock, that Bourguiba and Mohammed V are thinking of little else—and do not like the prospect either.

The question which Bourguiba and Mohammed V have asked themselves, and which some Frenchmen in Lipp's, though none, it would seem, in the Palais Bourbon, or the Hôtel Matignon, or even in the Residence of Algerian Minister Lacoste in Algiers, have asked themselves, is: "Suppose Algeria gets rid of the French and achieves full independence. What happens next?" The two North African chiefs of state have little doubt about what happens next. Habib Bourguiba and Mohammed V will be out of work.

The reasons for this and the practical conclusions which may be drawn from it are a little involved, and if I may be permitted to defer elucidation for a bit, I should like to present first, for illustrative purposes, a Lipp's-eye view of two incidents which in the course of the past half-year generated a great deal of heat. These two incidents were the Tunisian border attack by the Algerian fellagha of the National Liberation Front (the F.L.N.) on a French military unit, and the seizure by the French of a cargo of arms on its way to Morocco and thereafter, the French believe (and so do I) to the Algerian rebels. But first it will be advisable to sketch in the background against which they occurred.

IT SEEMS to be the fact that the French Army has at last succeeded in getting the Algerian revolt more or less under control. It is also a fact that this does not in the least solve the political question, and that in order to keep the situation under control the French Army would have to remain on the spot in its present force—not far short of half a million men—indefinitely, which it cannot possibly do. Nevertheless, the present position does provide an opportunity for negotiation. Terrorist attacks in the big cities have almost ceased. Fellagha activity has been petering out. The population is sick and tired of the whole situation, and the F.L.N. has sacrificed much of the sympathy it had among the people by its use of terrorism, which offset the analogous French mistake of using torture.

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Weariness on both sides had created one of the necessary prerequisites for negotiation. Negotiation, as a matter of fact, had never ceased. There has been no time when feelers, unofficial, unadmitted, and undercover, were not being put out from one side or the other with the hope of reaching some solution of this agonising problem. Various French governments have been acutely embarrassed from time to time when their emissaries, in contact with emissaries of the rebels, have been exposed in the exercise of their functions. The automatic reaction, required by some obscure law of French politics, is to disavow the luckless emissaries and deny any official sanction for their actions—there have been cases in which go-betweens who were observed in their go-betweening were jailed for intelligence with the enemy—but any French government which failed to make every effort to reach a settlement of the conflict would obviously be derelict in its duty. At last, however, the time seemed ripe for open and admitted negotiations, and two mediators or arbitrators or friends of the court, whatever you choose to call them, were at hand—Tunisia and Morocco.

France's former protectorates had on several occasions tendered their "good offices" to aid in bringing about a solution of the Algerian conflict. Frenchmen were perhaps justifiably sceptical concerning the impartiality of two Arab Moslem countries in a difference between another Arab Moslem country and themselves. However, the impartiality of Tunisia and Morocco is not a particularly pertinent question. The fact is that they are irremovably lodged in North Africa, one to the east of Algeria, the other to the west, with vital geographical and political interests in an Algerian settlement. There is no way in which they can be kept out of it. No agreement in North Africa is viable unless Tunisia and Morocco concur in it. Since they cannot be excluded, it is obviously making the best of the situation to get them to concur, and to commit them to whatever solution is reached, on the best possible basis. Thus there was every reason for France to accept their "good offices," however wary she might be about their attitude, at any moment when relations between them and France were good enough to permit them to play the rôle of conciliators. Such moments have been rare. One of them, however, occurred just before the two incidents which I have mentioned. The effect of the incidents was to rule out both nations, for the time being at least, as peacemakers. It is possible that this was exactly the effect which was intended.

It must be remembered that on both sides in the Algerian conflict there are bitter-enders unwilling to settle for anything less than complete victory for every last jot and tittle they demand —an obviously illusory objective for the French *colons* who are unwilling to give an inch, and very possibly an unattainable objective for the extremists of the F.L.N. also. These extremists, whose object is to prevent a compromise, have the easiest of all games to play. To reach a compromise is a difficult and delicate business, requiring goodwill and reasonableness on both sides. To block a compromise, it is only necessary to create a nasty incident whenever the situation seems sufficiently calm to permit agreement. This is what was done, deliberately on the Tunisian side by the F.L.N., possibly deliberately or possibly stupidly on the Moroccan side by the French.

TAKE Tunisia first. Here the relations with France had become better than they had been for a considerable period. A French mission had been organised to go to Tunis and discuss outstanding questions with a view to putting permanent relations between the two countries on a reasonably co-operative basis. It was at this precise moment that a fellagha band attacked a French unit, killed fourteen Frenchmen and took four others prisoner. The French claim that the F.L.N. fighters came from Tunisian territory and took their prisoners back into Tunisia. The Tunisians say they did not. Jean Daniel, after making a careful investigation on the spot, reported that he was unable to determine whether the fellagha had struck from Tunisian territory and retreated to Tunisian territory again. Actually, this is not the important point, though it is the one which immediately touched off the fury of Paris. The indignation in French official circles was directed at the violation of international law—probably the shakiest sort of law there is—constituted by an attack on their territory by forces based in a supposedly friendly neighbouring state. As the legally recognised government responsible for what happens in that state, the administration headed by Habib Bourguiba was called sternly to account. This was good law, but poor understanding of the facts of the case, which were that whether the fellagha attacked from Tunisia or not, Bourguiba was not responsible, except through the fiction of legality, because there was nothing he could do to stop them.

Perhaps the F.L.N. did attack from Tunisia. It seems more likely than not, since their objective may be assumed to have been, not to kill fourteen French soldiers, but to kick over the applecart of French-Tunisian rapprochement. Since this could be achieved most surely by actually operating from Tunisian territory and being caught in the act, it is reasonable to suppose that they did just this. They were per-

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fectly able to do it if they wished. Bourguiba has an army of 3,000 soldiers. The F.L.N., according to the most reliable figures I have been able to gather, has 40,000. It outnumbers Bourguiba even on his own soil, with a reported 7,000 fighting men among the 160,000 Algerians in Tunisia, whose total population is 3,400,000. These statistics illuminate one of the most significant aspects of Bourguiba's situation, but neither the French nor foreign correspondents have given much consideration to them. Bourguiba has.

"Tunisia," one of the Lipp habitués, a journalist with long residence in North Africa, explained to me with of course some exaggeration, "is an occupied country." It is occupied by the F.L.N. This is an angle which the French neglected when they attacked the Americans and British so bitterly for granting Bourguiba the arms which might help him achieve the strength to exercise effectively the responsibility the French demand of him.

Paris-Journal, a new liberal morning paper, seems to have been alone in understanding the real significance of the F.L.N. raid. It pointed out in a brief report, which escaped general notice, that every time relations between Paris and Tunis have been on the mend, there has been a border incident which has extinguished the momentary glow of goodwill and that the pattern has become too pronounced to be dismissed as a series of coincidences. It is a simple matter for the F.L.N. to create a border incident whenever it wishes to do so. And it wishes to do so, because it means to keep the Tunisians embroiled with the French.

Such a policy might have been conceived on any one, or any combination, of a number of levels. The simplest motive would be the desire to trip up France, the natural enemy, at every opportunity—even at the risk of tripping up Tunisia at the same time. A more complicated motive might be a desire to cut the ground from under Bourguiba's feet. The first and strongest supporter of the F.L.N. was Egypt's Nasser, who, as a rival of Bourguiba for leadership in Moslem North Africa, has backed Bourguiba's bitter domestic political adversary, Ben Youssef. The causes of the Youssefists and of the F.L.N. thus tend to become confounded. A third possible motive—and to my Lipp's-indoctrinated mind the most likely, or if there are several motives, the most important—is the desire of F.L.N. extremists, unwilling to accept any compromise or watering down of their demands to block the employment of Tunisian influence, to achieve a negotiated—and hence compromise—settlement of the Algerian conflict. Nor can we rule out the possibility that foreign influences operating within the F.L.N.—those of Cairo or, behind Cairo, Moscow—are sabotaging every rapprochement between France and Tunisia because they do not want the Algerian conflict to end at all—not even with complete and entire victory for the F.L.N., for then they would no longer be able to fish in troubled waters.

Whatever the motivation, or even if the F.L.N. attack at this place and at this time was pure coincidence, its major result was still that for the time being at least it was not possible for Tunisia to offer to help settle the Algerian conflict, or for France to accept the offer if it were made. Fifty per cent. of the potential opportunity for an Algerian settlement through North African mediation had been eliminated.

The other fifty per cent rested with Morocco.

On the western border of Algeria also, France's relations with an ex-protectorate had improved. The inevitable bumptiousness of a new régime had calmed down rather quickly. After an original tendency to force French residents out had sent 90,000 of them home, the Moroccans realised that they still needed them, if only for their technical skills and their capital. The French, on their side, had shown a little more appreciation of the limits within which they could hold Mohammed V responsible for the developments in his kingdom than they had in regard to Bourguiba. Three French ministries in a row had tried to minimise the heated demands of that sector of the French political spectrum which likes to refer to itself as the "patriots" for strong reprisals in certain painful individual cases like that of the vanished Captain Moreau, of whose fate nothing is known, though exceedingly lurid stories have been circulated about him. (One of the mildest represents him as being paraded about Moroccan territory in a cage, an object of public derision.) If the French authorities have refrained from pressing such matters with the Sultan, it is because they believe he can do nothing about them, and in this they are backed up by a respectable preponderance of the best opinion of Chez Lipp, which holds that the Sultan manages to appear to be in control of the Moroccan National Liberation Army, his own variety of the Algerian F.L.N., only because he assents after the fact to whatever these hard-headed and independent soldiers have chosen to do.

As a result of a certain amount of realistic give-and-take on both sides, French-Moroccan relations before these two incidents were reasonably good, and the Sultan was definitely a possible negotiator of peace with Algeria. It was at this juncture that French naval forces stopped the Yugoslav liner Slovenija, bound from Rijeca (Fiume) to New York, via Casablanca,

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Morocco, in what the French called Algerian territorial waters and the Yugoslavs the high seas. The French ordered the Slovenija into the Algerian port of Mers-el-Kébir, where they confiscated an important part of her cargo for Morocco, 148 tons of arms.

Immediately another international uproar broke out, the debated issue being once again a question of legality—which once again missed the real point of the business. The French maintained that the arms were on their way to the Algerian fellagha via Morocco. It seems highly probable that they were. Certainly the explanation of the shippers and of the consignee of the arms, who said that they were on their way to the Yemen, was not likely to be acceptable to anyone who owned a map. The final destination of the arms was, however, very much beside the legal point, and it was a legal argument the French had opened. Yugoslavia, a sovereign state, was within its rights in shipping arms to Morocco, and Morocco, a sovereign state, was within its rights if it received them. The arms were not "clearly contraband," as one French minister described them. They were entered openly on the ship's manifest.*

Why did the French elect to take a course which seemed in advance certain to provoke a sharp reaction from Morocco—and consequently eliminate that country as a possible mediator in the Algerian conflict? Could it have been because it was desired to produce precisely that effect? Did French bitter-enders want to block the possibility of Moroccan mediation as Algerian bitter-enders had already blocked the possibility of Tunisian mediation? The question does not seem unreasonable if one looks not very far backward into the past. On a previous occasion when the possibility of an Algerian settlement with the help of Morocco and Tunisia had seemed possible, certain elements in the French Air Force, without notifying the Paris government, intercepted a Moroccan plane in which Algerian leader Ben Bella, a personal guest of the Sultan of Morocco, was flying to Tunis, forced it to land in Algeria, and arrested Ben Bella, who is still in prison in Paris. Faced with the *fait accompli*, the national government could do nothing except follow through, for any other course would have been political suicide. Later, when unofficial representatives of the French Foreign Ministry, in contact with the Arab rebels, arranged for Ben Bella's lawyer to fly to Paris to consult with him, in an attempt to liquidate this embarrassing episode, another governmental department arrested the lawyer when his plane reached the capital, and the fat was in the fire all over again.

The stopping of the Slovenija shows striking parallels with the more spectacular kidnapping of Ben Bella. The Frenchmen who planned the coup must have had ample time to consult all interested government authorities—of whom the Foreign Ministry and the Algerian Minister would have been most immediately interested, to say nothing of the Premier—for French intelligence agents learned about the arms shipment before the Slovenija had even weighed anchor. The Navy Ministry seems to have been notified, but kept the secret to itself. The Slovenija was shadowed until it was off the Algerian coast, and there the arms seizure took place. Now if this episode was kept so carefully hidden from the responsible governmental departments which would be most directly affected by it, it seems an almost unavoidable conclusion that the motive for secrecy was the belief that the government, if informed, would have vetoed the seizure—a reasonable assumption. Once again, therefore, it was decided to face the government with a *fait accompli* and oblige it to cover, after the fact, an act which it would not have approved in advance.

It seemed inevitable that this new Ben Bella case would set France and Morocco against each other again. But now matters developed in a rather surprising fashion—and in a very meaningful one too, for the next step made it appear that Mohammed V, like Habib Bourguiba, had his eyes fixed firmly on the future, and found it disturbing. Of the two countries whose sovereignty France had impugned, one, Yugoslavia, made the strong protest that was to have been expected. But Morocco did not.

It was difficult for the Sultan not to make at least formal protest to France, for France, as the Chief North African colonising power, is necessarily the villain for North African countries, and the condition for political survival there is

* France justified her act in stopping the ship an admitted 45 miles off the Algerian coast—the Yugoslav captain claims 60—by pointing out that last September the French government had announced that it was extending the accepted normal limit of territorial waters—three miles—to fifty in the case of Algeria; and to forestall the obvious objection that a unilateral announcement of a change in standard international practice does not obligate other nations to accept the change as valid, it was added that no objection to the modification had been expressed at the time. This was a legalistic argument to which there was an adequate legal answer. The French announcement had been contained in a decree published in the *Journal Officiel*, of whose contents other nations were not obligated to take cognisance. So far as they were concerned, France's single-handed alteration of an accepted international standard had never officially been called to their attention and the circumstance that they had not objected therefore could not be construed as an acceptance.

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to carry a permanent chip on the shoulder in all dealings with France. Instead, Rabat most unexpectedly issued a statement pointing out that arms cannot be imported into Morocco except on licence and noting that no licence had been issued for this particular shipment. It was thus no longer necessary to call France to account for preventing the arrival in Morocco of arms which could not in any case have entered the country legally. The Sultan was thus skilfully relieved of the apparent necessity for getting into the embroilment with France which it is very possible the intercepters of the arms had intended to provoke. Yet such an embroilment would have been received gleefully by Moroccan public opinion. He might easily have made political capital out of it. Why did he resort to this ruse to avoid it?

Before we answer that question, it may be instructive to see how Bourguiba handled his situation, for at the end we shall again be asking why a chief of state acted as he did. Different as the two reactions may seem on the surface, the answer of the psychological-political analysis of Lipp's to the two questions is the same for both cases.

TO THE French charge that the fellagha who had attacked their soldiers had come from and escaped to Tunisian territory, Tunisia opposed a flat denial. French Premier Gaillard immediately dispatched two special representatives to Bourguiba to deliver a message on the border incident. On the pretext that it was an attempt at intimidation to have sent, as one of the pair, an army officer in uniform—General Buchalet—Bourguiba refused to receive them. This public affront infuriated the French, but delighted the Tunisians and for that matter Moslems everywhere in North Africa and the Near East. As the Paris press fulminated against Tunisia, and Deputies demanded of the government how much French money had been granted to Tunisia in 1957 (the answer was: "None"), the viewers in the grandstand of Lipp's took a tighter hold on the handles of their steins and braced themselves for the explosion expected when Bourguiba made the weekly radio speech which has become a feature of his performance. It turned out to be moderate, even conciliatory. And again the question was asked, "Why?"

Obviously Bourguiba did not want to take advantage of the opportunity, welcomed often enough in the past, to enter into an impassioned exchange of abuse with France. By the rebuff to Gaillard's envoys he had gotten himself off the hook before his own public opinion. It had thus become possible for him to attempt privately to repair the publicly-shattered good relations with Paris. Some observers believed that a good deal of Bourguiba's basic willingness to be co-operative stemmed from a new project of the French, the construction of a Y-shaped pipeline from the Saharan oilfields which are just now being brought in, of which one branch will reach the Mediterranean through Algeria, while the other will cross Tunisia and end at Gabès. Bourguiba is reported to have been much impressed by the possibilities for profit the pipeline will represent to poverty-stricken Tunisia. It would no doubt be naïve to think that so tough an operator has not also envisaged the possibilities for political blackmail which will be opened by a cross-Tunisia pipeline, once established, but that is a complication which we need not deal with now. It has no doubt occurred to the French planners, since they are projecting their pipeline in the shape of a Y, not an I.

The pipeline might very well account in part for Bourguiba's pulling of his punches, but the more important motive, which is the motive also of Mohammed V, is probably much more elementary—the desire to survive. Bourguiba is indeed looking into the future, and one brutal fact which he believes he discerns in it has convinced him that it is to his interest to ally himself with France so far as his own public opinion will permit him to do so. That fact is the possibility of the constitution of an independent Algerian state larger and stronger than either Tunisia or Morocco. If the Algerian forces today, hunted by the French Army, operating in clandestine fashion, are as 40,000 to 3,000 in comparison with Tunisia's, what will the relationship be if Algeria becomes completely independent, and completely subservient to its most fanatic nationalists, the F.L.N.? It is odd that the Occidental world, which has learned by slow degrees to assess the overt actions of North African leaders in the light of the corrective supplied by the realisation that they are forced to act publicly as France-baiters and West-baiters in order to maintain the support of their populations, has failed to take into account at the same time the effect of the even simpler fact that a strong, independent, rival Algeria is desired neither by Bourguiba nor by Mohammed V.

Bourguiba believes, it appears, that the constitution of an entirely independent Algeria would be the prelude to the annexation of Tunisia by Algeria. Whether this happens or not, it is highly probable that an F.L.N. victory would mean Bourguiba's personal downfall because of the linkages between the F.L.N. and the Youssefists, chiefly through Cairo, which his own benevolence towards the F.L.N. is designed to conjure. "Do you French really want the F.L.N. to be advised by no one except satellites of the Soviet Union?" Bourguiba asked Jean

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Daniel. He put the situation in a way which he thought would appeal most to French, and Western, opinion, but in his own mind the advantages of currying favour with the F.L.N. are no doubt seen primarily as a precaution for himself. It is a precaution in which it is probable he does not put much faith. Whatever he says in public, he wants the French to remain in Algeria at least to an extent sufficient to keep the F.L.N. off his back.

THE position of Mohammed V is not very different from that of Bourguiba. Morocco as a whole has less to fear from an independent Algeria than Tunisia. It would be rather difficult for the Algerians to overrun and annex the state which at present possesses the largest and strongest army in North Africa. But it is also the unruliest and there is no guarantee that it will defend the personal position of the Sultan. His situation even now is precarious enough. He heads an Arab élite constituting perhaps ten per cent. of the country's population which is attempting to govern the other ninety per cent. composed of Berbers, Moors, and assorted tribes refractory to central government. His present control over the Moroccan Liberation Army is largely fictional, a matter of mutual consent in pretending, for the time being, that the Liberation Army and the Sultan's government are marching to the same music. When they are caught out of step, it is the government oftener than the Army which changes pace.

The Moroccan Liberation Army is tuned psychologically to the same wave-length as Algeria's F.L.N., whose objective is the establishment of an independent Algerian *republic*. Achievement of this objective, as an ex-North African comfortably ensconced in Lipp's recently explained to me, would automatically threaten the *monarchy* next door to it. This is not simply a matter of republicanism versus monarchism. There is a sound practical political reason for the F.L.N. to combat the dynasty of Mohammed V. Although every attempt to restore the caliphate since the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire has failed, Mohammed V holds nevertheless a spiritual as well as a political position. In the eyes of many Moslems he is not only the temporal head of Morocco, he is also a religious leader to whom they are tempted to look for guidance. Mohammed V in power in a country contiguous to an F.L.N. Algeria might exercise a certain political influence in Algeria. The F.L.N. does not accept divided loyalties willingly; the most spectacular example of the exclusiveness in power it demands was the Melouza massacre, in which it wiped out the males of a village devoted to the cause of the other chief independence movement, the Messalists. The F.L.N. would therefore be most likely to suborn the deposition of the Sultan. Presumably the F.L.N. would not go as far as did Ataturk of Turkey in the direction of Moslem anti-clericalism, but it remains a safe prediction that it would like to eliminate the spiritual-temporal chief of state of Morocco from the North African political picture—and once the French have been removed from it (politically, of course; they cannot be removed culturally and perhaps not economically), it should not be very difficult to get rid of Mohammed V also.

"We have at present the best possible friends at the head of the governments of Tunisia and Morocco," said my North African expert of Lipp's. "It is possible that they do not love us deeply, but that is of minor importance. In politics as in domesticity, love changes quickly to hate, especially at times of divorce. The sort of affection Bourguiba and Mohammed are constrained to feel for us has to be of a durable nature. If it does not endure, neither do they. The question is whether we, here in France, realise what strong assets they are, and if we do realise it, are we wise enough to utilise them effectively?

THE Algerian question is an onion, of which each layer is capable of being regarded as the essential vegetable by one observer or another who has penetrated no deeper into it. The French legislators are dealing chiefly with the dry legalistic outer skin. The Arab population of North Africa, in the mass, sees the matter with simplicity as a conflict between Arabs of no-matter-what-North-African-region and the French, and accepts as an article of faith the belief that with the departure of the French the era of the terrestrial paradise will set in. Unlike Bourguiba and Mohammed, they are not looking as far ahead as the inevitable struggle for domination which will then follow among the Arab countries.

Even the view which is here being elucidated, that a solution to the problem should be inherent in the fact that France, Tunisia, and Morocco have a common interest in persuading Algerians to content themselves with a moderate measure of independence, is hardly located in the core of the onion. Merely to raise the point that Bourguiba and Mohammed V will be threatened if a completely independent Algeria arises, makes it necessary to ask whether in that case it might not be advisable, not to say inevitable, to let them go down the drain, leaving the way clear for the organisation of a great North African state sweeping from the Red Sea to the Atlantic

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—or at least from Tunisia through Morocco, the region already described by the single geographical term of the Maghreb. There are leaders in North Africa who are dreaming now of just such an Arab super-state, Nasser not least among them, though whether it is realisable or desirable is another matter. In any case, this would take us deeper into the onion than the political philosophers of Lipp's are at present interested in going, the question before the house at the moment being whether or not France can salvage anything at all from her investment in Algeria.

There seems little doubt that the problem *could* be solved, but a trifle more that it *can*. France has the brains, but the brawn may be lacking.

The brains have produced at least two formulas of great promise, one political and the other economic. Unfortunately, whenever the politicians, whom it is agreed for some reason to consider as practical men, get hold of the ideas which the theoreticians have evolved, they immediately proceed to squeeze all the substance out of them.

The political formula is for federation, with France and her present and past North African territories—and perhaps a few others as well—brought together in political partnership, instead of in the former relationship of, shall we say, guardian and wards. This would bring Tunisia and Morocco, already released from the French family, back into it again; but as what we have just been saying above indicates, Bourguiba and Mohammed V should have no particular objections to that. They would still be politically independent—as Canada is of Great Britain—and as far as other matters are concerned, economics, for instance, they have never left the French circle of influence anyway. It has just been shown that they have, even in respect to the Algerian question about which they seem on the surface to be so much in opposition to France, a common interest with her in regard to the future evolution of Algeria; and where there are common interests a commonly acceptable solution should certainly be discoverable. The formula of federation looks like the answer.

But is it an answer for Algeria also? Bourguiba and Mohammed V may be ripe for federation because they fear otherwise the constitution of a strong and probably hostile Algeria, but are the Algerians likely to renounce the possibility of becoming the masters of North Africa? The observers at Lipp's see no reason why the federal prospect should not be attractive to Algerians. The possibility of becoming top dog in North Africa is no more than a possibility, and a remote one at that, far beyond the immediate objective of independence; so if independence, in the same degree that suffices to satisfy Tunisians and Moroccans, can be had quickly at the price of relinquishing ambitious ideas of future conquest which only a very few individuals are nourishing at present, it is not likely that future dreams will be permitted to stand in the way of present triumph. Besides, an independent Algeria could not at first stand on her own feet economically, any more than Tunisia and Morocco are able to do so. The most logical quarter towards which any of these countries would turn for support is France, and now that the Common Market is struggling to become a reality, North Africa may also look forward to aid from the pooled resources of the European community through its French member.

THE other formula for North Africa, the economic one, is not an alternative, but is complementary to the political one. Indeed although the political formula could be applied without recourse to the economic one, it is difficult to see how the economic plan could operate at all without forcing political federation—if not on paper, *de jure*, at least in reality, *de facto*. This is the imaginative and ingenious conception for sharing the hitherto unsuspected resources of the Sahara, whose vastness is just now beginning to be revealed. The discovery that the Sahara, which up to now nobody has wanted, contains important mineral and oil deposits which to-day's techniques are capable of removing from its inhospitable soil, has suddenly brought up the question, to whom do these riches belong? The French have been assuming that they are theirs; but the Moroccans have already filed a claim to at least part of them; the Algerians have announced that they consider the Sahara theirs, and when—and if—they achieve independence will certainly make a determined effort to push the case; and there are a few other probable claimants waiting in the wings.

The plan evolved in France proposes to solve the question by not trying to solve it. Instead of arguing about who owns the Sahara, it will be developed on the theory that nobody owns it, or in more practical terms, that everybody does. It would be organised as an autonomous area and exploited jointly by all the surrounding territories for the profit of all the surrounding territories, which would bring in some of France's Black Africa possessions as well as the Arab states. This is a proposition which could very well have an attractive ring in spite of the national covetousnesses which have developed in Africa along with the new nationalisms. In a struggle among perhaps half a dozen rivals, it would be reasonable for each one to agree to

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settle for a sure sixth of the Sahara's riches rather than to gamble on the risky one-in-six chance of winning them all. Even France, at present in possession, can see advantages in thus buying off those who might otherwise try to dispossess her. If she cannot succeed in holding Algeria on the old basis—as her inability to hold Tunisia and Morocco makes more likely than not—then how, in the next step, will she be able to hold the Sahara? And even if, having lost the other territories, she does hold the Sahara, how will she get its resources out, since it will be ringed by the territories of hostile rivals across which the Sahara oil and minerals will have to be transported?

The Saharan proposal thus seems a remarkably deft one, all the more because it kills with one stone two birds neither of which seemed very likely to fall even to a perfect hail of brickbats. Besides solving the problem of the exploitation of the Sahara, it also helps solve the problem of Algeria by providing an attractive and solid economic basis for a political federation including a politically independent but otherwise interdependent Algeria, and a guarantee that the federation will stick together, since the most likely bone of contention within such a federation would be competition for the wealth of the Sahara. Thus the Saharan plan is reminiscent of the bridge coup which gains a trick by the expedient of throwing a loser on a loser. In this case throwing away two losers results in winning both tricks.

All of this looks quite feasible at the middle of the Boulevard St. Germain, where Lipp's is located, but follow the street to its beginning at the Seine, where the National Assembly sits, and the view abruptly changes. The Saharan plan has already run the gauntlet of the legislature, and though a Saharan area has been set up, it has been shorn of many of the most essential features of the idea whose broad lines are given above; and it is possible that it would have been better, for the success of that idea in the future, if the project had been defeated in its entirety—because then there would have been nothing to tear down before putting up a new structure. As it is, the present Saharan régime may dig itself in so firmly that it will later be very difficult to reform it.

THE legislature has not been able to grapple yet with any proposals for a North African solution as radical as the federal scheme, for there is not enough agreement amongst the parties to produce a text on the basis of which the idea could even be discussed. Instead it has gone through the typical, and typically dispiriting, process of producing in what is called the *loi cadre*—basic law, skeleton law, framework law—the customary play on paper with ideas unconnected with reality—at least, with North African reality. What the Deputies are concerned with primarily is not the Algerian problem but the French political problem. What any French government must put together first of all is not a text which will end the Algerian war, but a text which a majority of the legislature will accept. There does not seem to be any formula in sight which will serve simultaneously the realities of the North African situation and the realities of the French political situation.

This is what the Algerians have always complained about and it is one of the reasons why they want to be independent of Paris—Algerian problems have always been treated not on the basis of Algerian necessities, but on the basis of French domestic politics. However, it is no simple matter for the French to disengage themselves from the Laocoon-like windings of their political entanglements. It is probably true that in Algeria the French, if they were politically free to negotiate, would find it easier to come to a compromise with the F.L.N. than with their own *colons*—the Algerian-born Europeans, of whom there are 1,200,000, some in their fourth generation on this soil, many of whom are willing to go to any lengths to maintain their privileged position in the territory. At moments when the French government has not seemed disposed to back them up completely in maintenance of their domination over the non-European population, some of them have even proposed a European-commanded secession from France—a messy way to commit suicide. The point of view of the *colons* is represented in the Paris legislature by the Right and many of the groups which are described, with scant regard for the dictionary definition, as moderates. Dealing with it in Paris is even harder than dealing with it in Algeria, for the government of the moment has to walk a tightrope agitated not only by the champions of the *colons*, but also by various other groups whose reactions about Algeria are quite as strong, but entirely different. Meanwhile the Poujadists on one extreme of the Chamber and the Communists on the other have abandoned all pretence of dealing with the issues before them, and are simply engaged in heaving vegetables at the governmental incumbents. In short, the problem France has to solve is not the Algerian problem. It is the French problem.

That is why the men sitting in debate at the foot of the Boulevard St. Germain cannot see the North African situation as well as the men sitting at café tables in its middle—even when they are the same men, caught in a slightly different conjunction of co-ordinates in time-

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space. In the Palais Bourbon, they are too absorbed in the Parisian present to have time for the Algerian future. As politicians, their vision is obscured by the necessity of trying to peer through the obscurity of the confused and turbulent fog of French internal politics. It is not until they have wrested themselves away from the Chamber and struggled the half mile to Chez Lipp that they can see Algeria as through a glass, clearly.

Waverley Root

C. A. Trypanis

Why Did I Choose That Man

At some stage in our life we pick up our younger self dead off the battlefield.
W. Bethe

If we could meet our younger self, we would hardly recognize him.
K. Palamas

Why did I choose that man among the dead,
So many heaped bronze-shirted on the ground,
Blood streaking down their armour poppy-red,
Ravenous dogs and vultures circling round?

Could I have met them long before? Those eyes,
That cheek, nudging the helmet's harsh bronze cheek?
Or was it through his marble sleep's disguise
Those lips, half-parted in the struggle to speak,

Muttered some secret of our earlier days—
The boy that laughing takes to the blind track,
The morning smoke unfolding through the haze
That neither words nor hands can gather back?

I heaved him into the chariot, drove away
Across the plain towards the Achaean camp.
Like trailing stars, handed from night to day,
The horses galloped down the windy ramp.

And, as I drove, I gazed down at the dead,
Jogging against the livid sky of Troy.
A broken tulip lolled his boyish head—
Myself perhaps, when half a man, half boy?

Through dust and wind how could I recognize?
And then for what? No healer now, no priest
Can coax away the sleep that drowns his eyes,
All I can give him is a burial feast.

A feast, where the Achaeans will say good-bye,
Bronze, wet with tears, and torches sadly flash,
Until on his tall pyre against the sky
The long flames lick the body into ash.

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Dan Jacobson

Everything Without Tears

West Coast Impressions

MY SON, aged seven years, started school in California within a week of our arrival in the United States, and finished the school year just before we left the country. Inevitably, it was from his attendance at the school—and our association with it as parents—that we drew much of our idea of an American education. And not only of an American education: the American school system is clearly much more than a system of teaching boys and girls how to read and write and do sums. Indeed, it was from the school that I drew much of my general idea of "America"—of America not necessarily as it is, but America as the Americans like to believe it might be, it could be, it should be.

In American society, the school system has been given the deliberate and explicit task of the "Americanisation" of the children of heterogeneous origins who come to it. Everyone knows that American schoolchildren salute the flag every morning before school starts, and pledge their allegiance to the flag and to "the Republic for which it stands, one nation, indivisible, under God, with liberty and justice for all." But there is another sense in which the schools are agents of Americanisation—and in which the agent acts with less consciousness than it does when it marshals the seven-year-olds and puts them in front of the American flag. And because it acts less consciously here, it acts—in a way—more revealingly. After all, we knew more or less what the oath of allegiance was about even before we had come to America; but we had to come to California to learn what St. Valentine's Day (as it was conducted at our local school) was about.

I mention St. Valentine's Day because it was a day to which I had never before given any thought at all. In America, however, and with a child at school, St. Valentine's Day became of some importance. Even if we hadn't had a child at school we couldn't have remained entirely unaffected by the displays of St. Valentine's Day Cards at every drugstore and in every supermarket; but it was the school that brought home to us the importance of the Day, and its message. And the message, as it was interpreted by the school, was a message of love—suitably enough. But the love was not one in the way of hearts intertwined and Cupid loosing little arrows at boy meeting girl under the moon, as it was on all the cards. No, the message of love sent out by our local school was much weightier, general, and abstract: and more distinctly American too.

Some weeks before Valentine's Day we received a circular letter from the headmaster of the school announcing that the Day was approaching, and that the school would be happy to help in the distribution of Valentine cards. But, the letter added forthrightly, no cards would be distributed in class from any

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particular child to any particular child, unless each child who brought cards brought them for *every member* of the class. Thus, no child would receive more cards than any other; there would be no discrimination in favour of the most popular child or against the least popular child: each child would receive exactly as many messages of love as every other child. And to help ensure this happy, abstract democracy of love, a list was appended to the circular, giving the names of all the children in the class to which our son belonged. It should be added that there was a footnote too, telling us that the school had no objection to parents or children posting cards direct to other children, or giving cards after school hours—but, so far as the school was concerned with the arrangements, and so far as the school was responsible for them, any favouritism was forbidden.

And the point about this school really was that to the best of its power it tried to turn every day into St. Valentine's Day. On every day occasions were found for the expression of love, esteem, and mutual regard; on every day favouritism or discrimination or competition were forbidden within its precincts. The school went as far as it possibly could in the direction of goodwill to all, and the avoidance of any kind of competition or comparison between the children. Conventional report-cards were not issued, I remember, lest the reports should lead the parents or the children to compare the record of one child against that of another. (Instead of a report-card there were individual parent-teacher "conferences" at which the child's progress or lack of progress was discussed in private.) And at the beginning of the year the headmaster made a speech whose substance was that the function of the school was not to pit the children against one another in any kind of a race, but to ensure rather that each child did as well as could be expected in the light of his own particular abilities. "We want to make your children happy," the headmaster told the assembled parents; and it seemed to be taken for granted by him and the parents that happiness should be a matter of co-operation, collective enterprises, and democratically indiscriminate goodwill.

And I must say as a parent that in our particular case the experiment seemed unmistakably successful. The children were happy—our child was, at least; though he came to the school as a stranger, he was happier in it than he had been at school in England. It must be added that in the year he spent at school in America his writing positively deteriorated, his spelling certainly did not improve, and what progress he made in arithmetic could be at best described as very slow. But even if he did not learn much about reading, writing, and arithmetic, he did learn a great deal about the craft of pottery, the distribution of milk from a local wholesale dairy, the rules of fire-prevention, and things like that. It should be said, too, that he was more at ease and socially adept with adults and with other children than he had been before going to school in California, and the difference did not seem to be due only to the passage of time.

The question arises of to what extent the school with which we were associated was "typical" of schools in America; and it is one which I cannot really answer. I can only say that from what we gathered from others we spoke to on the subject, our school district was generally conceded to be "good." But this does not seem to me to affect the general line of argument I am following—which is ultimately about something as large and vague as the American idea of how a society can best be brought together in peace. We never heard a word suggesting that the "goodness" of the school district was in itself something that could be questioned: if ours was particularly good, it was good in a way that any American might hope all the schools in the country might one day be. The idea of goodness remained the same, and it is about the idea that I am writing: the idea made bricks and mortar and sheets of glass to let in the sunlight on the gay, lightly-furnished classrooms; the idea interpreted and nourished by the devotion of the head-

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master and the staff of the school. And if hard work is any sign of devotion, these particular teachers were indeed devoted.

THEIRS seemed to be a vision only of peace, co-operation, and goodwill—all of it erected upon a basis of great and continuing prosperity. Because if we were struck by the gentleness and leniency of the school-staff, their unending anxiety that the children in their care should be and should remain together happily, we were struck at least as much by the facilities available to the school to be gentle, lenient, and anxious with. The school was like a treasure-house, a place where the children dipped their hands into heaps of wonderful possessions, which were replaced as fast as they were taken out. There was nothing that the school might possibly have needed that the children had to do without; and there were, in addition, a hundred other things that the children did not need—that no child could possibly *need* —but were available for them nevertheless.

Probably all schools nowadays give children clay to play with; but at our school the products of the play were glazed, put in a kiln, and fired, so that the children brought home not clay-models but pieces of elaborate and contemporary pottery-work. That there should be radios, television sets, and movies at the school was taken for granted. It was taken for granted that every other few weeks there should be a party at the school (to celebrate such events as the opening of a new assembly hall, the visit of an obscure state senator, or merely the departure of one child from the school to some other); and that from these parties the children should return home laden with a booty of balloons, sweets, *papier-mâché* firemen's helmets, flags, and miniature baseball bats. The children were taught subtraction by the remarkable method of presenting them with, say, ten sweets, and telling them to eat three, and then to count how many sweets were left. Every public holiday was the occasion for the construction of the most lavish and expensive home-decorations, each child taking home his decorations, and none of the materials ever being put back into the common pool to be used again. And paper! Every other day the children would stagger home under great wads of paper covered with their scribblings, or rather just scribbled upon once and then put aside. A single word upon a foolscap sheet meant that that sheet was discarded; if a single piece of coloured paper was stuck upon a piece of cardboard two feet square the cardboard was sent home for the proud parents to examine. And the paper and the cardboard were all of the very best quality, with a high, fine gloss—none of that soggy greyish stuff in mean little notebooks which I can remember using as a child, and which I had always thought of as good enough for a child. But in regard to the provision of facilities generally, some kind of climax was reached for me when our child—aged seven, I repeat—came home and told us casually that a whole lot of typewriters had been brought into the "Multi-Purpose Room" at the school, and he was going to have his first typing lesson the very next day.

When one is in a position to take for granted such ample supplies of the very highest quality materials and facilities, it begins to appear almost reasonable to hope that life and human affairs—or rather, and even more optimistic yet—that school-life and children's affairs can be a matter of goodwill, peace, and co-operation only. The world was there to treat the children kindly, and it did: school and home were alike in the obeisance they made before the children, in the gentleness with which they handled their charges, in the lavishness with which they provided them with all the things that the great American technology could offer.

It is—when you come to think of it—really an extraordinary way of dealing with children who are supposed to grow up into harried, harassed, grabbing, bolting, hunted, rat-like creatures who will eventually die the hideous Deaths of Salesmen in some or another heartlessly bright corner of the forty-eight states. *These* are the Americans who arouse the contempt and scorn of half of educated Europe: these creatures who are fierce, predatory, driven wild by the adver-

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tisements in their search for goods, yet who for all their fierceness live in constant hopeless terror of the Joneses and the due-date of the next instalment on the television set. These are the Americans, we are asked to believe, that the school and the methods of child-raising in the homes do actually produce. Of course they do not; but that is a secret that many Americans seem anxious to keep.

When I think of the people in our suburban Californian street, and the way these people lived together, I can only repeat my conviction that the school offered the best small image of this society's hopes for itself—and of some of its achievements too. It was an image that aroused many misgivings; but I must admit that for me it allayed many more.

Carnival in California

In California, among our acquaintances, were an instructor at a university, a teacher at a junior school, a reporter on a local newspaper, an assistant in a furniture store, a psychologist employed by a research institute. They were all young people who had just started their careers and had put down something on a house and were paying the rest off. And it was taken for granted that people of this class should be able to move into brand-new homes that were ready-equipped with *all* of the following: a large electric stove, a large refrigerator, a large washing-machine, a large spin-dryer, and a furnace that heated the entire house as a thermostat dictated; most of the houses were equipped with garbage disposers and water-softening machines as well. Television sets, radios that woke you up and made your coffee at the same time, hi-fi gramophones and mixmasters you presumably had to provide yourself, if you wanted them—and a great many people did. But even without the extras each of these mass-produced, middle-class, matchbox homes looked opulent enough, once you were inside it.

The equipment of a middle-class household was just a part of the overall air of prosperity in California that was quite unlike anything I had ever seen anywhere else. It was impossible not to be dazzled by the glitter and profusion of goods that were on display in the shops and in the homes, on the roads, stacked away carelessly in garages or thrown to rust in vacant lots, given to children at school—that were thrust at one everywhere, all the time, from all sources. There was a constant massive creation, consumption, and disposal of goods—a sheer bulk of *things*—that we could no more have imagined before coming to California than we could have imagined the fierce, inescapable, nagging, maddening persistence of the advertisements that were intended to hasten the process.

The "atmosphere" of life in our suburban town, Palo Alto, was thus very much a tangible affair, it was so involved with the things we found ourselves surrounded by. Biggest and brightest and most numerous among these things were, of course, the motor cars. The number of cars that there were on the roads cannot be described, it can only be indicated weakly enough by saying that when a gang of road-menders came to re-lay the tar in front of our house their cars were parked in a long string half-way down the block. And what the road-menders had, the kind of family I mentioned in the first paragraph had in double measure, for almost every garage of their homes was built for two and filled by two. As for the appearance of these cars—they were of a size and gaudiness that invite description in terms of fantasy only.

And the cars seemed to have set the style for many other things in California. Even small things in California were bigger than they would have been anywhere else, if I can express myself that way. For instance, a drying-rack for plates in California was at least one and a half times the size of the largest drying-rack for plates I had seen anywhere else; a packet of potato chips was like a balloon blown out; the chips themselves were almost palm-size . . . what wasn't King Size, in short, was Giant Size; and if it wasn't Giant Size it was Family Size; and if it wasn't Family Size it was nothing less than Jumbo Size. Everything came in a package that was glittering, inflated just beyond reasonable

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proportions into some kind of mild fantasy object. The packaging was often absurd and ugly; but it was in itself an indication of the grossest prosperity. I still have with me a plastic potato bag, which we used to carry children's toys in. This potato bag is big, of course, and is decorated with red, white, and blue stripes: on the back of the bag, also in red, white, and blue, are stencilled four elaborate recipes for Potato Surprise, Potato Supreme, Potato Fritters, and Potato Potage, as well as a communication entitled "Potato Know-How," which informs you that Mealy Potatoes are best for baking and creaming, Waxy Potatoes are best for scalloping and frying, and that to retain those valuable natural vitamins you should pare as closely as possible to the skin. It is a remarkable potato bag in every way.

WITH a packet of flour my wife received a palette knife; and with a packet of salt a "jewel tumbler." If you bought enough of one kind of margarine you could get a pair of nylons, and if you bought enough of another kind you could get a set of steak-knives. Steak-knives also came if you bought enough porridge, cake-mixes, and soap. The margarine, incidentally, never came but it was divided into four quarter-pound tablets individually wrapped in gleaming foil and then packaged together in a highly decorated, greaseproof cardboard box. All that, and the promise of steak-knives too. And the bread never came but it was ready sliced and Totally Wrapped; and the milk never came but it was Homogenised and Vitamin-Enriched. Orange-juice, too, was invariably homogenised; so was cream; so was yoghurt; so was peanut butter; so was dietetic milk for those who are slimming.

I had never felt the need for a special little metal brush to use for putting butter on corn on the cob, when I ate corn on the cob; but there wasn't a hardware store in Palo Alto that wouldn't have been very happy to provide me with a family-set of brushes for this very purpose. My wife had never before noticed how inconvenient it was that when she had finished using an oven-cloth she had to go and hang the oven-cloth on a hook; but in Palo Alto every supermarket had a special line of oven-cloths containing little magnets inserted in a corner of each, so that she could just fling the cloth against any metal surface and it would stick there. Boys' jeans came with a built-in patch of leather on the seat, so that from the day they were bought these jeans could look worn, old, rough, tough. And this leather, it should be added, was guaranteed laundry-proof. And that bitter taste that comes from licking the flaps of envelopes has been banished in Palo Alto, where it was impossible to buy a packet of envelopes that did not have delicately spearmint-flavoured flaps. Such—one cannot resist saying—seemed to be the flavour of life in Palo Alto.

I suppose if one looks for them one can buy butter brushes for corn on the cob in London too, and spearmint-flavoured envelopes as well. The point was that in Palo Alto one didn't have to look for them; they were available everywhere. And the point, too, is that Palo Alto isn't London, but a suburban Californian town of forty thousand people; and that what Palo Alto had Redwood City had too, and San Jose had too, and Burlingame, and every other place in that sprawl of new suburban towns which lay between ourselves and San Francisco.

WERE there no really poor in Palo Alto? There were very few. There seemed to be very few anywhere in the entire Bay Area of San Francisco. I remember one drive that took us to a queer, rather sinister area, near the fringes of the bay, well away from any other towns, where the ploughed fields and orchards had given way to humps and tussocks of reeds and pools of standing water. Across this marsh they had built a road that lay lavish and cared-for on its causeway; and as we drove there rose out of the waste the tanks and stacks and towers of some factory. The buildings were very new, smokeless, and stood on ground reclaimed from the marsh and on a level above it, as the road did. But beyond, and lower than the road and the factory, was a settlement of some kind. The

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houses were clapboard affairs on concrete blocks, unpainted and unwashed; none had a garden; each stood directly on the streets which were so many lengths of churned-up mud. At the end of one street a wooden shack with sacking in its windows and reeds growing at its door said in huge but horribly faint red letters: Dancing, Eating, Drinking. There was not a soul to be seen; and so it was only by the cars standing in the mud in front of the houses that one knew this nameless place was inhabited.

This was the worst we saw nearby, though there were a few other places further off that were as bad in a different sun-blistered way; and that demand mention among the references to all the opulence. So, too, should a conversation I had with the mother of our regular baby-sitter. The baby-sitter herself was a fourteen year-old girl, and several times when she was unable to come her mother helped us out. Driving the mother home one night I made some comment on the prosperity of the country, and was told that for her part my passenger wished there were less of it. This I had never heard before; people occasionally apologised for American prosperity, or made jokes about it, but all of them seemed to accept it as something inevitable, increasing, and really rather jolly. "It's the children who are hurt by it," I was told now. "They don't understand why we can't afford to get all the things they see in their friends' houses. There's so much we can't afford, and really we don't mind, we're grown-up and can understand. But the children feel cheated every time they go away to a party or something like that. I'm almost sorry when I see them go, because I know what they'll feel like when they're there, and what they'll say to me when they get home." She spoke sincerely and directly; and though her voice was quite unlike the strident, harried, keeping-up-with-the-Joneses voice that I'd been warned I'd hear in the suburbs—and though, indeed, I never heard the latter voice—it was nevertheless chastening to listen to her. But those who had warned me scornfully against the voice of the suburbs might have been chastened too, had they heard her, for not the least touching thing about the way she spoke was her apologetic tone, the fear she felt lest she was being harried or envious or was merely trying to keep up with the Joneses.

There is nothing that is simple where human beings are concerned. Everyone in America is against poverty, and in America they have done more than anywhere else in the world to abolish it. Yet this has not made anything simpler for the Americans—neither for the rich nor for the poor ones. In America a kind of "poverty" chases the Americans as fast as they flee from it—even if it chases them in a motor car.

WE USED to buy our groceries once a week at a supermarket: we would go from one supermarket to another, depending on the "specials" that were offered each week, and depending too on how energetic we were or how curious we felt about those we hadn't seen yet. It is with a certain sense of shame that I have to admit that I *liked* shopping in a supermarket—that central image of the suburban life in California—and even used to go into the supermarkets when I had nothing much to buy. They were all so big and brightly lit, and they always had such elaborate novelties going on, in the way of advertisement mobiles suspended from the ceilings or trains puffing around on rails around and about the display shelves, or things on pulleys coming up and down over your head. Usually there was some kind of free ticket one could get for a lottery or raffle which the supermarket would be conducting; and like a man in a good bookshop, one could browse at leisure among the tins and the frozen foods and the imported delicacies and the innumerable varieties of ice-cream and the household gadgets and the magazines and the rows upon rows of glistening vegetables. No one ever came up to ask you to hurry along, or to ask you what you wanted, and there was space in the corridors for all the housewives to pass without disturbing you.

The supermarkets in California—Ameri-

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cans from other parts of the country told me —were the biggest in the country; and certainly none that I saw in New York had anything of the size and variety of the halls I got to know so well in Palo Alto. Halls they were, with their acres of parking-space around them, with their wide, rink-like floors of rubberised material within, their fluorescent lights, their sheets of glass in louvres, their mysterious doors that opened so promptly with a hiss when you approached them and closed with another mechanical and intimate hiss as you left. And inside these halls was all of America's plenty. Imagine a counter seven feet high, with a shelf on every twelve inches going up, and imagine these shelves six yards long, and imagine all these shelves for all that length and height filled with nothing but different varieties of *dog-foods*! Imagine another counter, the same height and the same length and with the same number of shelves, but this one for spaghetti—spaghettis only! And then detergents, or cans by the thousand, or breads, or biscuits, marching out of sight like regiments. And all the meat wrapped, packed in pretty layers, encased in massive open refrigerators, with only the blood oozing about dismayingly inside the cellophane of each package, to show you the low animal origin of what you handled. And who has ever before seen so many different kinds of paper? There is waxed paper, and greased paper, and kitchen-towel paper, and lavatory paper, and nose-blowing paper, and children's diaper paper, and gummed paper, and paper streamers for parties and paper cups for picnics, and paper plates for the TV evenings, and Christmas paper for Christmas-time, and paper to write on and paper to draw on, and silver paper to put over the roast in your oven. There's shaving-soap; there are onion-chopping machines; there are polythene bowls and colanders of every size and description; there are egg-plant and little pots of caviare; and there are "Bud" or "Lois" or "Cecile" (it says so on their overalls) to take the parcels from your trolley and put them in a box and add up all the prices and take your money away from you, and give you Blue-Chip Redemption Stamps or Green Seal Stamps in return, and your lottery ticket, and a friendly, friendly smile. "And how are you this morning?" Lois once said to me. "I'm fine," I replied; and Lois went on with her addition on the machine and when she'd finished she looked at me with the same bright smile. "And how are you this morning?" she asked. "I'm fine," I replied; but it wasn't as true as it had been the first time she had asked me.

EVERYTHING I have written here has perhaps intensified in the mind of the reader the notion of the American as a wallower, a low materialist, a bathroom addict, a kind of Far Western suburban lolling pasha. But if we are going to have hierarchies of "lower" and "higher" activities in our minds, we should at least make the effort to know what the hierarchy looks like. In America it didn't seem to me that it was "materialism" that was symbolised by the garbage disposers, dish-washing machines, and all these other large enamelled objects. On the contrary—whenever I was in an American home equipped with these devices I couldn't help reflecting that if "materialism" was a bad thing (of which I am not entirely persuaded anyway), I knew of nothing more unpleasantly material than, say, trying to wash up too many dirty plates in a too-small sink in water insufficiently heated by a too-small boiler. It is the Americans themselves who are the most devout upholders of a hierarchy of higher and lower activities; and that is precisely why they have bent their immense zeal and energy on the task of liberating themselves from the human battle with stubborn, grubby, resisting matter.

And now they have come so close to success that the chase for possessions has become quite a merry one—it has lost much of its desperation, and has become a kind of carnival, a free-for-all, a way of spending time, a kind of recreation. I think these terms are absolutely accurate in describing something of the spirit in which goods are offered in California, and the spirit in which they are bought.

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Snapshots

CONTINUALLY one thought in San Francisco what this place *could* have been like, with the hills crowning it, with the mountains backing away from it to the south, with the water all around it, with the two great and beautiful bridges flung out like wings on both sides of it. And there was the history of the place, with its legendary, disreputable days of high living and gold-rushes and earthquakes. And Chinatown was still charming in a touristy way, and the Fisherman's Wharf was charming in a touristy way, and the International Settlement was charming in a sadly decayed but equally touristy way, where the contrived ghosts of good times at the burlesque linger among the cracked gilt and the coloured tiles and the pictures of the legs of girls who'll dance no more. But one charm—such as it was—contributed to no other: the spirit sagged in the rubbishy grey streets between. Market Street, particularly, stands out in my mind as one of the ugliest main streets I have seen, so besmeared with signs over its nondescript buildings that there was nothing for the eye to do but dart from place to place in a vain search for rest. The city, as a city, made no gesture, spoke no meaningful word. And it was so very anxious to: perhaps that was the trouble.

There was nothing in San Francisco that so became it as the ways one could approach or leave it. The first half of the Bay Bridge—before it dives through Treasure Island and re-emerges in a less graceful form on the other side—is one of the most superb human structures one could ever hope to see. The bridge stands so high, it is so huge and grey, with all its steel and concrete and its wide and ever-busy lanes of traffic on two decks, like a whole city; and yet it travels so easily, arcs suspending it so lightly as they rise to the towers and sink away, only to rise again. Golden Gate Bridge, too, had the same strength and lightness, the same purposefulness and ease; but it is the Bay Bridge that I most remember, perhaps because I had not been warned about it and it came as such a surprise.

And on the other side of the Bay Bridge one came to a place where roads swooped up to the bridge and spiralled down from it, where the roads weaved over and under the bridge and each other—as if there were nothing to marvel at that so many roads of such sizes should all be up in the air. There were structures like this on both sides of the bridge and again a little further out of San Francisco. To me they were a wonder every time I saw them; and I still don't understand why no one talks of these systems of over-passes and under-passes, when they stand outside every big American city.

THE road from San Francisco was crowded with Sunday traffic: all the week-day trucks were there, but so too were all the private cars carrying families to visit other families, and cars towing boats behind them, and cars with leather-jacketed boys towing motor bikes behind them, and stripped and numbered hot-rod cars, all pelting in the direction of Los Angeles. We followed the highway some way beyond San Jose; and then turned off into a side-road that took us through the Pacheco Pass. On the other side of the pass the hills were all green and silver, covered only with the silver-tipped grass that threw no shadow but lay in equal light everywhere, under the sun—the softest light and the least harsh country we saw anywhere in California.

In the San Joaquin Valley the light was dulled by dust and the earth was flat and the road ran straight into the east like an arm pointing. Only the silver water-tank of each dusty and bedraggled and shadeless little township of wooden houses rose above the level of the plain. The tanks gleamed in the confused light; but all the other colours were yellow and whitish—the fields had been cut, and only a stubble had been left, stretching on, without relief. The miles passed without distinction, like the townships lost behind us, and the fields, and the wire fences that ran to the horizon at right angles from the road.

Then, sluggish and black ahead of us, we saw a main highway, with the traffic moving ant-like on it, and we came to the highway,

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and turned among the traffic, which once we were in it was a continual roar and an intermittent thud and a flashing of the sunlight against metal and glass. Sadder and dirtier and more haphazard than on the roads near San Francisco were all the drive-ins and gas stations and motels, and shadeless, too, no trees anywhere near the wide expanses of the highway or the jumbled occasional buildings alongside it. Like a cataract the highway poured through a place called Madera, but we stopped there for petrol, and as we stretched our legs we felt under our feet the continual nerve-like shudder of the passing traffic.

And Madera has remained in my mind as the type of all those inland towns we passed through on our way to Yosemite and our way back again: a place without shade, laid down square in a grid that loses its shape on both sides, where hot little hamburger stands and motels string themselves out along the highway. Its central shopping-area was a muck of buildings, of neon signs thrust close against one another and flickering against the fierce daylight—neither paint nor neon hiding for a moment the clapboard shabbiness of the place, but only showing it up more crudely still. The sun blistered everything it touched, and there was nothing that it did not touch; there was nowhere to hide from it in Madera, or to hide from the highway which drove wide through the town, with its noise and its shaking of the earth, and then swept on again.

And as Madera was, so was Modesto, and so was Los Banos, and so too were many places whose names we never learned but saw briefly from a car or a train in the United States—places of a barrenness and a harshness and an ugliness that was like an act of violence, an explosion of anger, a blow with a clenched fist, a pistol shot. The sense of violence done was inescapable: each place looked as though it had been flung down so hard that it had cracked, and what was spattered furthest lay in the fragments of orange-juice stands and motel signs on the outskirts.

And indeed one cannot come to the United States and travel about it without developing a sense of violence having been done, and even more dangerously impending. It is there in the cities, with all their tall buildings and the long streets between; it is there on the roads that are built to carry the cars that rush like things gone amok; it is always there when one looks at the places that people have put their hands to: towns so harsh and neon-lit and unpitied, so new, so restless with traffic and people who have the air always of having come from elsewhere. And one expects these people to be as harsh and unpitying as their cities and roads; and there is, it is true, more violence in the United States than in a country like England: there are more murders, rapes, riots, lynchings, more sudden and unpredictable outbreaks of rage and fear and frustration. But when one *sees* a place like Madera or Modesto, the wonder is only that there is not more yet; and when one considers that most of the people in them do in fact come from elsewhere, and are new to their country, that their sole guides to conduct seems to be the advertisers and the radio and the television and the tabloid press, the wonder is why they aren't continually at war with one another, that there is so little frenzy, that over a continent of towns like Madera and worse cities there should be so much peace, so much gentleness.

SHORT STORY COMPETITION

As announced in our March issue, ENCOUNTER, in association with International P.E.N., is offering prizes worth £300 for the best English translations of short stories originally written in one of the Asian, Arabic or African languages. Prizes will be equally divided between authors and translators. The judges are Graham Greene, Stephen Spender, Angus Wilson and Gerard Hopkins.

The rules of this competition were published in full in the March issue, or may be obtained, free of charge, on application to ENCOUNTER, 25 Haymarket, London S.W. 1. The closing day for entries is 31st October, 1958.

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Tommaso Landolfi

Pastoral

A Story

I

DEAREST Solange,

You were utterly mistaken. I have waited till now, till I was quite certain, before telling you so; and now I can tell you in all honesty—"I can *really* tell you" as the worthy Madame de Caulaincourt puts it. To imagine that I could not bear to live here for longer than a week! Solange, this is heaven on earth. And think of this: I have been here for nearly two months. If you only knew, my dearest, how I bless the inspiration that brought me to this place—my uncle's inspiration, too, in doing his duty by dying at the right time. Say what you will, my uncertain budget was hardly aided by the Empress's balls, or by my frequent visits to the Palais Royal. Here, the delightful and the sensible are united. I taste, for example, the pleasures of possessions—or, rather, of property—in a way impossible with Parisian bankers, who do what they please with your money when they see that you know nothing of finance. In any case, I cannot leave everything in the hands of the agent here. I do not wish to speak ill of my late uncle's régime; but the agent has already bought himself two houses in the village, and a piece of land in the neighbourhood. But I did not mean to speak of this matter; and it is certainly not for this reason that I bless my resolution. My poor Solange, how can you know, how can I tell you, of the unsullied joys of country life, of this delicious new world?

In short, picture me, the happy mistress of a real castle and of a large estate—and the conscientious administrator of the latter. I often wander in my carriage through my woods, which the autumn is already beginning to touch with gold. I often go to the village, which, I may add, also belongs to me, with its simple inhabitants (the agent's affairs are in hand). I confess that the carriage creaks a little; and that the coachman and his groom have not the philosophical air and the carefully cultivated moustaches of their Parisian colleagues—and I cannot understand a word they say. But, by way of compensation, their liveries are far more attractive.

Paris! Of course I will return there sometimes, perhaps often. But—dare I say it?—the whole world of Paris now seems to me like a bad dream.

You should not think that I am afflicted by solitude. The more or less noble landowners of the district have hastened to call on me; most of them, of course, are insupportably provincial, stupid and bigoted. But among them there is one.... A man who... I might as well speak plainly. He is young, dashing, romantic. He rides like an Englishman. He reads the poets, and recites them ardently... well, why not? After all, he bears one of the oldest names of the region. Like me, he is free and independent. But I can hear you ask, "What do you mean: why not?" Well, my love, I can tell you no more of this now.

This letter has already continued too long.

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Will you have time, I wonder, between your entertainments and balls to read it? Certainly not to meditate over it; nor dare I hope that you will be able to tear yourself for a few days away from the maelstrom of your life in Paris and allow me to embrace you again. Farewell, then, I will send you more news of me very soon.

Anne.

II

DARLING Solange, it is I. So much time has passed since we met, and even since we last corresponded. But I have had so many and such pleasant things to do.

Very well; you want to know how the people here start to hibernate at the beginning of winter—and we are almost there. It is easily said: they do nothing in particular; they make no preparations—except a solemn feast, with appropriate potations, the day before they settle down. There are no *lits embaumés*, no ointments, no purging of blood or vapours, no injections, no attendants, no fussy quarantine, none of the many operations usual at our (but now I should say "your") *maisons de léthargie*. And without any of this, I repeat, things seem to go excellently by themselves—though you would find it hard to convince the Paris specialists! And do you know where they hibernate? Certainly not in "carefully conditioned surroundings," or wrapped in a "softly reacting substance which . . ." etc., etc., but simply where they happen to be, or where they will—in the kitchen, perhaps, or the hay-loft; wrapped in a goat skin, of the kind they use for wine-skins or bagpipes. More precisely, it seems that they have themselves suspended, or suspend themselves, from beams in the ceiling—and so good-night! I have in fact seen, a few days ago, some of these goat-skins, or rather bags made of skins (for one skin would not be enough for a child), hanging from a beam, when I was visiting a large and needy family. They were empty, of course; but their use was explained to me. The hairy side is turned inwards; and, at one extremity, there is, as it were, an extension for the legs. In these bags they remain seated, or almost so; so that, with the softer parts of their bodies weighing down, they hang there like so many kitchen vessels. I will give you further details of this, for I feel that it will not be long before the hibernation begins. Another thing; the number of people in Paris who hibernate is severely limited; for all I know, negligible. Indeed, among us (I mean, among you) nobody hibernates except those who are so poor that they have not even a dry crust to eat, or some old general in retirement, or some hysterical woman who cannot bear the cold, and so on. But here the practice is by far more common, and extends even to the young, even indeed to children.

Well, we will see. I will keep you informed; but I have nothing more of interest to tell you now. Remember me.

A.

III

DEAR Solange,

The winter is advancing with giant strides, indeed it has already arrived in these parts; and the people here are beginning to hibernate. I can no longer keep count of the bags hanging from the beams during my visits of charity. They—the bags, I mean—give off a foetid odour like bladders of lard, and soot is already gathering on their surface, for they are nearly all in the kitchens. The spectacle is certainly repellent—but, above all, surprising. Besides I must timidly confess that I have never before seen a human being hibernating. Yes, yes, I know that you will laugh at me; indeed, after being very wise about it in my last letter, I now remember that, at one time in Paris, the practice was quite fashionable among unhappy lovers (who even tried to prolong the period of insensibility indefinitely); so that one who has ever been a woman of the world should almost feel ashamed not to be minutely informed about it. But, with humility, I repeat that I had never seen a human being hibernating. In truth one cannot be said to see them hibernating here, since they hang like blocks of wood; one cannot hear them breathe. How

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strange these people are, who do not hesitate to subtract the entire winter from their span of life!

In my admitted ignorance, I wonder whether this practice is really a practice, in the sense of a habit? Or whether it is in some way connected with the nature of these people and of all those, in general, given to hibernation? Or is it a habit which has become second nature to them? I do not know what to think, or even, as you see, how to frame the question properly. If we are to judge by the unhappy lovers of Paris, we may conclude that hibernation is a voluntary action; and yet.... But why do I burden myself with these reflections ... unless it is another consequence of living here? In any case, listen to this.

A few days ago I saw, in one of the poor houses, a tiny and charming little boy, whom I already knew; one of my little friends, in fact. They were preparing him for hibernation. He was yawning and rubbing his eyes, and did not seem in the least discontented. But I could not bear the thought that four or five months of that young life would be thrown away. I spoke to the family, and told them that I was prepared to take him with me for the winter. I meant not only that I would relieve them of a mouth to feed, but also that I would try to keep him awake and maintain his interest in life. They only understood part of my meaning. The little boy was consulted; he mumbled something indistinct but did not seem to oppose my suggestion. To cut a long story short, I took him with me to the castle. It would be quite useless to try to describe to you the efforts which I made to keep him lively and in good spirits, or even awake—I mean, literally, awake. I failed completely. Nothing amused him, nothing interested him; he yawned continually, and seemed to desire nothing but to fall asleep. Indeed he did go to sleep all over the house, in my arms when I was talking to him, while he was eating the rarest delicacies. And he was by no means a stupid child, as I had been able to observe before this languor had overcome him. In short, I had to take him back, sound asleep, to his family, who, with a smile hinting that they had expected no other outcome, returned him without further ado into his bag; and added: "Shall we talk about it again in April?"

Well, who do you say to that? Ah, why do you write to me so seldom? Why do you tell me nothing of Paris and of your life? Do you think that I have become altogether a savage? Farewell; write to me soon.

A.

IV

SOLANGE, my dear,

I begin to be alarmed; I can no longer hide it either from myself or from you. An unbelievable number of people here have already fallen asleep. Wherever I go, I see nothing but hideous, foetid bags hanging from the ceilings. And one incident sums it up. Do you remember that in my first letter I spoke of a noble and romantic young man who ... who, in short, was paying his addresses to me? Very well, then; he—yes, he.... O Solange! Yesterday we were in my drawing-room. I had played a little. He, in his turn, had recited a poem, written by himself, whose inspiration only modesty prevents me from revealing to you. The hour was propitious for our hearts to declare themselves. I was at that very moment thinking that the time had come when I could give him some grounds for hope, that there was no reason in the world why I should not do so. He had seized my hand, and I had abandoned it to him, when ... Ah, my friend, how can I tell you? Behind his gaze, I saw with horror the beginning of a sort of languor, not of the kind you would have imagined, but terribly like a sort of dullness, even of indifference—the indifference of a man who is on the point of falling asleep. Think, Solange; at that very moment of all moments he was beginning to fall asleep! For a little while he held my hand in his, doing nothing, gazing at me ever more childishly, apparently oblivious of our critical conjuncture and of everything else. Then he drew back a little, dropped my poor damp hand, yawned (still, I confess, with urbanity), walked to the window,

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tapped on the glass, protested something about a headache, mumbled something else incomprehensible, and, without even taking his leave (I was too dismayed to speak) took to his heels. This is the whole story. To-day I am told that he has started to hibernate. Oh, no doubt his bag will be made of sables. My God! What else can I say but "My God"?

And the others! I do not remember if I have ever spoken to you about certain of my relations, or rather my uncle's relations. I went to call on them last evening, in part to recover my spirits. I found them all seated round a table, in solemn silence. One glanced occasionally at a newspaper thrown on the table; but not so much at the newspaper as at the advertisements in it. Another was smoking a cigar and staring at his nails; but he was not smoking it so much as occasionally lighting it. A third had his elbows on the table and was doing nothing whatever.

They were silent, or spoke with difficulty of the weather. At the back of their eyes I could see that languor which I have come to recognise. It is not difficult to prophesy that soon they will all have fallen sound asleep.

Meanwhile, this morning a terrified procession of peasants paraded before me, having insisted on seeing me, carrying presents in kind. I was given a confused explanation to the effect that these offerings were always, by tradition, made on this day of the year, and were "for hibernation"—though it is given a different name here. A terrible suspicion crossed my mind: did my uncle hibernate as well? And, in truth, I seem to remember that he used to wait till the spring before answering my winter letters, though he was so precise in all his other dealings. But no! What am I imagining? And yet I recently discovered in the cellar—which I had never visited—an entire store of the horrible bags, and some already full! It seemed to me that I had not seen certain of the servants for some days. But the agent is as lively as ever, and the old butler holds up well, although always he is somewhat dull by nature; and the same may be said of the first housemaid. But the cook has for some time. . . .

But tell me, Solange: do you think it possible that they will all fall asleep? They all tell me—all the survivors, that is—that those who have work to do remain awake. But what advice could you give me in such a matter?

The snow has fallen in profusion, and blankets the fields as far as the eye can reach. It is beautiful; but it is a little sad.

What are you doing in Paris? Will you at last make up your mind to write to me? But in Paris, at this very hour, the carriages are beginning to draw up to the Opera; bejewelled beauties cast their glances to left and to right; their lovers approach them closely at the entrance; everything in Paris lives and trembles with movement, the very air trembles.

Ah! Do you think that I ache with nostalgia for all that? You would be mistaken. It is only my nerves playing a treacherous game with me. I must be resolute; I have sworn to be resolute. Farewell.

A.

V

SOLANGE,

My Solange, my only friend, listen to me, you must save me now, instantly. The very instant that you receive these lines you must taken your travelling carriage; you must run, you must fly to save me. Solange, do you love me? Dear God, I cannot write calmly. I can hear his horse trampling and snorting in the courtyard below me—I mean the hussar's horse. Yes, they have all fallen asleep, every last one, in the castle, in the village, everywhere, all of them. Even the agent, even the old butler a few hours ago. He was the only one left, and I could find no way of keeping him awake—with brandy or with offers of money; he did his best, but in the end it was stronger than he. I have no time to tell you. I sped outside: the silent desert of the snow. It was like a fairy tale—no, there is always a kindliness about fairy tales; it seemed liked a fearful nightmare . . . but I am wasting precious time, and his horse is trampling ever more loudly. At last, after an infinite time, I saw him far, far away in the

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snow, a speck of black which swiftly grew larger. It was he, that handsome young hussar; he whom, for whatever reason, the Lord has sent me. He was galloping madly. He stopped unwillingly. I begged him, I implored him to carry me with him on the saddle. He replied, "I am carrying orders, Mademoiselle." If you knew what I had to do and to say to induce him to delay for ten minutes, not more than ten minutes (and he took out his watch), just the time to write to you these despairing lines, which he has promised on his honour to have delivered to you by the swiftest means. There are only two minutes left. Understand me well, Solange. I cannot prepare my food, I cannot do anything, there is nothing in the house, I am frightened of the horses, I could not ride them to safety—even if they too are not asleep. I shall die here if you do not save me. Solange, Solange, do you hate me? Yes, you were right after all, but now there is not an instant to lose.... And if...if anything should happen to him on the road? Great heavens, I hear his voice calling me.... Solange, my soul, what can I say to you? Save your wretched

A.

Nieves de Madariaga Mathews

For J. P. de Dadelsen

"Veux-tu que je touche pour toi
ces fleurs, ces cheveux, ces choses?"
J. P. de D.

For you who have loved with a sensitive tongue
li-chee and avocado pear
I'll eat these wild strawberries
tasting of woods and of the sweet air—
for you. For you
who pointed at the things you liked, as a young
child will—who lie now, looking towards the shade
with one eye full of light and one closed eye—
for you I listen this night with a new despair
to an ancient cry, falling in the thirds you paused for
down the major stair. For you
with every mouthful of my daily bread, I drink
the glow in the Roman walls your clear eyes found rest in
—yellow and pink—
and bathe in the round, red sun
as it widens, as it almost stops between two dark—
between two tall cypresses. For you I wait breathless
—Will it ever again rise?
Will you again touch this earth's flavours and scents?
Open on this earth you loved with every distinguishing sense
Your two eyes?

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FROM THE OTHER SHORE

MAREK HLASKO, now 25, is easily the best-known Polish writer to have emerged in the post-war period. He can, perhaps, be described summarily as a peculiarly Polish mixture of Hemingway, Françoise Sagan, and James Dean (to whom he bears a striking resemblance).

Hlasko became the literary editor of *Po Prostu* when this students' weekly was transformed into a national paper in 1955. More recently he was on the editorial board of the literary magazine *Europe*, which was suspended before it has appeared. A collection of his "shocking" short stories, published in 1957 under the title *First Steps in the Clouds*, had a phenomenal success. Four full-length films were made on the basis of his stories. In a recent poll of Polish youth, he was named as their favourite writer. Last year he received the highest literary prize in Poland, conferred by an independent body of writers and publishers who were, for the first time, acting upon literary and not political considerations.

Hlasko has just published a book in Paris, where he is vacationing, consisting of two long stories. One of them had already been printed in Poland, but the other, called "Cemeteries," is new. It is a satirical indictment of Stalinism, full of bitterness and anger, and it has provoked violent attacks on Hlasko by the Party organ *Trybuna Ludu* and the semi-official *Polityka*. Hlasko is there denounced as, among other things, a disciple of Orwell, "that classical master of anti-Communist pamphleteering." The attack had been preceded by similar charges in the Russian *Literaturnaya Gazeta*; and a quasi-official Soviet intervention, mentioning Hlasko by name, recently caused the Polish Communist Party's spokesman to announce a further curtailment of the relative freedom of expression which the Polish writers had won in October 1956, and which was subsequently gradually reduced.

A film based on Hlasko's story "The Noose," which was to be submitted to the Cannes Film Festival, has been withdrawn and banned in Poland since the publication of "Cemeteries." But Hlaska is defiantly unrepentant, as can be seen from the following extracts from an interview given by him to the Parisian weekly *L'Express.—Ed.*

*

Q: The Russian and Polish newspapers have just published violent attacks on "The Cemeteries," which was recently brought out in Paris —in Polish. You are regarded in Poland as one of the leading representatives of the "new wave." We're interested in these attacks because they prove that there's a conflict. We would like to know what, in your opinion, is at the root of this conflict?

Hlasko: It's the most normal thing in the world for politicians and writers in totalitarian countries to be at opposite poles.

Q: How do you define a totalitarian country?

Hlasko: As I see it, it means the implementing of an ideology without any scruples about ways and means.

Q: Do you see it as a situation that offers no way out? Or do you see a way of resolving it?

Hlasko: Tactics are all right in politics, but they lead absolutely nowhere in literature.

Q: Are you planning to return to Poland?

Hlasko: Yes, of course, and regardless of the consequences.

Q: Were you ever a Communist?

Hlasko: There is no such thing as Communism.

Q: Did you belong to the Communist Party?

Hlasko: No.

Q: In what ways do you disagree with the literary line laid down by Socialist realism?

Hlasko: I'm not the one who can answer that question.

Q: Why?

Hlasko: It's quite obvious that Socialist realism is utter nonsense. There are no such things in literature as realism and neo-realism. Culture is one and indivisible.

Q: Who are the writers you like or who have influenced you?

Hlasko: I don't know which writers have influenced me, but if I must say whom I like best, it's surely Dostoievsky. When you read *The Possessed*, you feel that neither Koestler nor Orwell nor anyone else has gone further than Dostoievsky.

Q: You mentioned Koestler and Orwell. Is it possible to read their works freely in Poland?

Hlasko: Yes. Their books aren't on sale, but they're passed around. By and large, anyone interested in literature is familiar with them.

Q: Have you read any contemporary French writers? What do you think of them?

Hlasko: Sartre and Camus, in Polish translation. I've read very little contemporary literature,

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but I have read a good deal of French literature, particularly works of the 19th century.

Q: Are there any contemporary Russian writers who are highly regarded?

Hlasko: I can't give you any names, but if they could write, they might create a great literature on the basis of the frightful experience they've acquired. That's rather a feeling of hope on my part.

Q: *Literaturnaya Gazeta* has said that your style of "unqualified realism" conflicts with "Socialist realism." What do you think of that statement?

Hlasko: I can't take the literary critics of *Literaturnaya Gazeta* seriously. It doesn't matter whether what they write about me is favourable or unfavourable—what they say carries no weight.

Q: Do you have the impression that you'll be able to continue writing in Poland and to have an influence as a writer?

Hlasko: You mustn't exaggerate the influence of literature. But, in any case, when I return to Poland I'll write.

Q: But do you think you'll be able to continue publishing in Poland?

Hlasko: I can't predict facts. The literature of Socialist realism predicted facts, which have all been demolished.

Q: Why do you want to go back to Poland, since, according to your definition, Poland is a totalitarian country in which you doubt that you can express yourself?

Hlasko: I have memories of what I experienced there.

Q: But couldn't you live with these memories in France, for example, where you could continue to write?

Hlasko: A writer without his country is nothing. Poland is an extraordinary country for a writer, and it's worthwhile putting up with all the consequences in order to live in that country and observe it.

Q: Do you think that totalitarianism has become more liberal since 1956?

Hlasko: No doubt about it. It has.

Q: In what spheres? Political or literary?

Hlasko: You can't divide the two. In both.

Q: One of your stories has been filmed....

Hlasko: A series of films have been based on stories of mine.

Q: Do you plan to work for the films? Is the film a medium of expression for a writer in Poland?

Hlasko: Yes, of course.

Q: How does censorship operate with regard to films?

Hlasko: It commits murder.

Q: From the literary point of view, have you had any difficulties in being published?

Hlasko: Two books that I wrote were accepted but couldn't be published.

Q: Could you tell us very briefly what you tried to express in your two stories "The Cemeteries" and "The Next One to Paradise"?

Hlasko: I'm afraid that in answering that question I may be laying it on thick: I'd like to put people on their guard against totalitarianism.

(*At this point, the photographer arrived. Mr. Hlasko insisted very strongly that he not be photographed.*)

Q: Why won't you let yourself be photographed?

Hlasko: I don't like my face.

Q: But you've got to live with it....

Hlasko: ... without pleasure.

Q: How did you come to be a writer?

Hlasko: The road that led me to literature was very different from the one followed by my fellow-writers in Poland. I didn't come to it from above. I came up to it from below. And when I began to write, I'd already seen so much that it was absolutely impossible for me to believe in official truths.

Q: Do you feel isolated in the Polish literary movement or are there many young writers working along the same lines as you?

Hlasko: I'm unable to say whether I'm isolated or not. I think that the trouble with Poland at the present time is that there is no generation. A "generation" presupposes people who share an idea for which it's worthwhile taking action. At bottom, the thing that unites us is disillusion. It's a feeling of "no hope." That's far too little to be an incentive to action. And a generation that doesn't act is an object rather than a subject.... The worst thing about totalitarianism is that it kills the imagination.... What I feel most deeply, and what I feel particularly here in this room, is the dramatic impossibility of conveying one's own experience. As I see it, the intellectuals I meet here are intellectuals who react to what happens in the other part of the world purely from the point of view of their moral attitude, but they haven't that horrible daily experience. That's why I have the impression that it's quite impossible for me to tell them anything. If I told them that the worker's deepest dream is to get drunk in order to forget himself for two hours, to forget himself completely, they wouldn't believe me, but it's a fact. The misfortune of a man who lives in a totalitarian country is the feeling, a feeling that never leaves him, of the grotesqueness and ridiculousness of one's own self—the reduction of dreams—the reduction of desires—a moral atrophy—the inability to react to the vileness one sees at every step, every day. The great writers of the type of Malraux, Koestler, and Orwell did, after all, see the world through heroic categories.

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For me, that kind of thing is utterly disgusting and ridiculous. Ridiculous above all! Acceptance of the truth of one's own life is the hardest thing possible. The only thing possible for a man who has no prospects before him to defend himself against that truth. In Poland, in a provincial town, my books were burned....

Q: Do you write in order to defend yourself against that situation or to try to analyse it for others?

Hlasko: I try to record inhumanity and not to expose humanity; that would be ridiculous of me. I only try to show up the forms of life that debase man.

Q: Do you have the impression of finding in France a kind of man different from the kind you find in Poland?

Hlasko: I'm deeply convinced of it.

Q: What major differences do you observe?

Hlasko: I think that people here are able, at least to some extent, to get an element of joy out of life. That may seem to you very naïve, but that's how I feel about it.

Q: Are you interested in politics?

Hlasko: Politics interests me as much as it does a streetcar conductor, a pimp in the street, a motorman.

Q: Do you dream of a change in man's situation in Poland, and what kind of change would you like to see?

Hlasko: I'd rather not answer. I wouldn't dare answer frankly and seriously. There's just one thing I'd like to say: that I'd very much like to be wrong about all the bad things I've said. I'd prefer to be a liar.... I'm twenty-five years old. I began to work at the age of thirteen. During those twenty-five years I've lived in a completely abnormal world. What can I dream of after that?

Q: In so far as you consider it to be an abnormal world, you're bound to have some idea of a normal world. That's the idea we'd like you to clarify.

Hlasko: I don't know what a normal world is —but I'd like to live in a world in which a gesture of friendship isn't transformed into a gesture of self-destruction.

Q: Is this the first time you've been away from Poland?

Hlasko: Yes.

Q: Is it possible to live in Poland just by writing, or do young writers generally have another occupation?

Hlasko: It's quite possible. As for myself, I had a good break in Poland, but I earned most of my money working for the films. I did three films, all by myself, and a few working with a team.

Q: You said that you started working at the age of thirteen.

Hlasko: That's right. I worked as a bell-hop in a nightclub, and then, for six years, as a taxi-driver. Moreover, the second story which has just been published here, "The Next One to Paradise," happens to be the story of mountain drivers who bring wood in cars that are so dilapidated that they're nothing but heaps of junk. They all get killed, one after the other. The story is closely linked up with my personal history.

Q: Since you've been in France a very short time, Mr. Hlasko, do you have any questions you'd like to ask us? ...

Hlasko: I'd like to ask you just one thing: do you feel there's any possibility of creating something between East and West in order to get rid of this hell? In order to change this hell? ... What is it you expect of the Gomulka experiment? Is it not the experiment of taking over the management of a business that has gone into bankruptcy? ... Do you have the illusion that the West can help Poland in any way whatever, although it's still in the Soviet orbit?

Q: There's no doubt about it.

Hlasko: That's very noble of you.

Q: You were, all the same, allowed to come to France. You never would have been able to come before.

Hlasko: There are thirty million of us!

Q: That's true too. And your view of the world is very understandable, given the conditions under which you've lived.

Hlasko: Above all, I'd like to be stated clearly that I'm speaking in my own name and not at all in the name of Polish youth or Poland in general. I absolutely couldn't bear the idea that what I've said might hurt anyone.

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Herbert Passin

The Jeevan-Dani

A Profile of Jayaprakash Narayan

ON 18th April, 1954, the sleepy district capital of Bodh Gaya, where very little had happened in the 2,500 years since Lord Buddha had found enlightenment under the banyan tree there, became the venue of the 6th *Sarvodaya* Conference, under the leadership of Vinoba Bhave, Mahatma Gandhi's spiritual successor. In attendance were the Prime Minister, Mr. Nehru; the President of the Republic, Mr. Rajendra Prasad; the Vice-President, scholarly Dr. Radhakrishna; the Governor and the Chief Minister of the State of Bihar; the head of the Praja Socialist Party, Acharya Kripalani; and many other political notables. On the afternoon of the second day, 19th April, in the midst of the routine discussions, Jayaprakash Narayan, the Socialist leader, rose tall and handsome in his flowing white Indian garments and his Gandhi cap, to make a dramatic declaration which, in the words of one observer, "turned the tone of the conference and gave it an awful solemnness." He was making an offer of his life—a *jeevan-dan*. Forswearing politics, he would henceforward devote himself exclusively to the Bhoodan movement.

I

IN INDIA, the offer of one's life—a *jeevan-dan*—is something more specific than our vague idea of "dedicating oneself to a cause." Even Mr. Khrushchev, it will be recalled, on the occasion of his accession to the premiership of the Soviet Union, announced his dedication to the people and the Party: "I . . . shall not spare strength, health, or life to serve you." But no one feels that this obliges Mr. Khrushchev to forgo his little pleasures in life, his vodka and cocktails, his fine automobile, his well-tailored clothes, his special apartment. No one expects that "dedication" requires him to live on the same level as his people. In India, however, this is precisely what it does mean: the renunciation of all personal ambition and possessions; living on the same level as the people; whole-souled, selfless dedication. There, in order to establish one's *bona fides* as a "servant of the people," one must make some deliberate act of renunciation: give up wealth, ambitions, personal and family life, sex, power.

There is nothing that stirs Indians to such enthusiasm as the spectacle of a man in the fullness of life making an act of renunciation. As Hallam Tennyson once observed, speaking of Vinoba Bhave: "Renunciation of worldly possessions—that ideal finds its echo in every Hindu heart." In ours too, one is tempted to add. But Hinduism is more exigent and explicit about it. In the doctrine of the four *asrama*, or stages of human existence, the first two, called the "student" and the "householder," are spent fully in and of this world. In the third, one begins to dispossess oneself of earthly possessions; and in the fourth and final stage—*Sanyas*—one gives up everything and becomes a beggar. Now, one can give up the world to seek personal

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salvation—and this is what renunciation usually implies in the West. But if one gives it up for the sake of mankind—the Buddhist ideal of the Boddhisatva, that is, the man who has attained perfect wisdom, but delays his entry into Nirvana in order to remain on earth and help suffering humanity—then we get the kind of thing that happens in India: the Gandhis, the Vinoba Bhaves, the Jayaprakash Narayans, the businessmen who strip themselves down to the loincloth and go forth to serve the people, the students who give up their careers and pledge themselves to poverty and celibacy, the Servants of India Society. It is this kind of renunciation that wins hearts in India. And the winning of hearts is the key to Indian politics. (Perhaps the secret of the popularity of the Communists in Andhra and Kerala is the selfless dedication that so many party workers have—in the very best Indian tradition—during the early stages of the movement, before they take power.)

Therefore when Jayaprakash Narayan, or JP as he is familiarly known, one of India's greatest public figures, makes a *jeevan-dan* at the age of fifty, this means a deliberate giving up of something: of political leadership, of the prospect of high political position—some even say the prospect of succeeding Mr. Nehru as Prime Minister. "JP is a saint," some of his friends insist. For others, he is a shrewd politician with the long view; for still others he is an irresponsible who deserts his party when it is in difficulties. But whatever one's opinion, there can be no doubt that his has been one of the most extraordinary careers in Indian politics. By turns a nationalist firebrand, Marxist-Leninist, founder of the Socialist Party, guerrilla warrior, democratic Socialist, he is now an active worker in the Bhoodan movement and a Gandhian.

"I ALWAYS tell people," an Indian friend once said to me, "that in the Bhoodan movement there is one saint and one politician. People always understand by that that I mean Vinoba is the saint and JP the politician. But I mean the opposite. Vinoba is a great and shrewd man. But JP is a real saint."

Jayaprakash himself would be the first to reject this description. And certainly if saintliness implies formal religious piety, JP does not qualify, I suspect. But that there is some relationship between religious feeling and self-sacrificing service I did feel on my first visit to him at his *ashram*, then newly constructed, in Kawakol, in the State of Bihar, in 1954.

A gentle religious glow bathed the place. To quote from my notes of the time: "My first morning there, we were awakened by a bell at five a.m. People came astir and performed their morning ablutions silently. The morning fog lay heavily on the valley so that the mountains and trees loomed forth like figures in a Chinese landscape. I walked back into my hut from the slit-trench latrine outside to bump into a pair of legs staring me in the face. My room-mate, a devoted practitioner of yoga, was standing on his head, an exercise which he assured me is excellent for the circulation of the blood. At five-thirty we gathered on the other side of the central compound for prayers, three women and about twelve men, the women facing the men, all seated on grass mats under a thatched-roof lean-to. First, as with the Quakers, several minutes of silent meditations; then songs from the Upanishads, led by one of the women, and sung with eyes closed:

> *That is full, this is full. The full comes out of the full. Taking full from the full, the full itself remains. Om peace, peace, peace. . . .*
> *By the Lord is encompassed all this, whatsoever changing there is in this changing world. Through the renunciation of that world mayest thou enjoy; covetest thou not anyone's riches. . . .*

In the prayer that ended the session I kept hearing the word "Narayan, Narayan," sung in a tremulous and haunting voice by the woman leader, and I wondered if this was some tribute to JP.

> *Aum Tatsat Shri Narayan Tu. Purushottam Guru Tu. Sidh Budh Tu. Skand Vinayak Savita Pawak Tu.*
> *Aum, that is. Thou art Narayan. Purushot-*

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tam teacher art Thou. Sidh Budh Thou. Skand, Vinayak, Sun Fire Thou.

Later I learned that "Narayan" is the name of one of the avatars, the manifestations of God.

True, this was a universalist service, not a sectarian Hindu one. (Gandhi established this tradition of readings from the main religions of the world—Judaic, Islamic, Christian, Buddhist, etc.—in his prayer meetings.) But I was still surprised to see an old secular Socialist like Jayaprakash so keen on religious services. "It's a good thing," he said to me, not answering my question directly. "And what about religious conventions, like not eating meat?" I asked him. "Oh, I don't eat meat now," he said. "I don't have any objection to it. But you see the peasants here are very religious and they would be offended if I did." It would be easy to argue that this shows the shrewd politician skilfully catering to the prejudices of the mob. But what JP said was: "This is an easy sacrifice to make for the people."

Not that Jayaprakash is opposed to religious belief. Since his conversion to Gandhianism, he has come slowly to feel the need of some philosophic and religious basis for ethics. And he has not hesitated to resort to religious techniques like fasting. In fact his famous 1953 fast in Poona was a turning-point in his life; it led him to reject "materialism" and to enter the Bhoodan movement. But one has the impression that he is too secular, rational, and empirical to make the kind of surrender that true religious faith requires. Therefore, although he still continues to search for a spiritual basis for ethics and morality, there is something rational about his approach.

Perhaps the same ambiguity may be seen in another incident. JP has suffered from diabetes for many years. When I met him in 1954, he was in an acute phase of discomfort, but he was refusing to take insulin injections. The reason was that Vinoba, who for religious reasons was against injections, had asked him to use certain Aryavedic treatments instead. "I'm not against injections on principle," JP told me, "but Vinobaji has asked me to try these other things. If they don't work after six months, then I can always go back to insulin." So he continued to suffer and even run the risk of death or permanent injury, in spite of the pleading of his friends, just to avoid offending the religious sensitivities of Vinoba and the peasants. Or was there something more? The Gandhian doctrine is that one must live on the same level as the people and never have more than they have, so that if the people cannot afford insulin, their devoted servant should not use it either. Or it could be that modern medicines are such a nuisance to handle in the primitive countryside. Or that Aryavedic methods have, in fact, a good record of cures. As matters turned out, Vinoba's methods worked, and JP has been able to carry on.

II

At a little over fifty, JP is tall and handsome, as if chiselled by some ancient Greek sculptor and brought to life. His eyes are warm and have a touch of sadness; he speaks slowly and softly. But underneath the gentleness one feels a barely-restrained violence, and an occasional flash of fire will remind one that after all he has been an underground guerrilla leader. What seems to underline this is a certain immediacy and directness: "do it now." JP is impatient of any interval between the conception of an idea and its execution. As a revolutionist, he said, in effect, "I am against British rule; therefore I shall act." As a Gandhian he shows the same quality. Why wait for the stateless society, he asks? Start living it now —by co-operation, by non-violence, by village self-rule. Why wait for the distant future?—start practising the ideals of the Socialist society immediately, in daily life. By doing it now, one starts the revolution "from below," rather than waiting for the word from on high, or for the ineluctable processes of history to create the necessary conditions. "If in the new social order," JP said recently, "property is to belong to society and the property-owner is to be a mere trustee, the revolution begins with individuals converting themselves here and now into trustees."

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No great orator, he persuades by a sincerity which is sometimes overwhelming and always disarming. In argument, perhaps even too disarming. I remember once saying to him that I thought Bhoodan often takes land from the wrong people, from small peasants who are already operating an acreage that is too small. "Does this not," I asked him, "make the fragmentation of holdings—already one of the curses of Indian agriculture—even worse?" This, it must be understood, is a central criticism made by economists of the Bhoodan movement. JP paused for a moment and then, very thoughtfully, he said, "Yes, you are probably right. I don't know the answer to that one. But I am sure that eventually, given the will and the understanding of the villagers, we can find a way to work it out." This same readiness to concede another's point, even a telling one, I have seen over and over again. During a conference in Rangoon in 1955, a brilliant University of Chicago professor argued with great skill that if JP's ideas were to succeed then there would in effect be created two separate societies—one the village, handicraft, low-level economy, and the other, the modern, high-speed, machine economy. "Don't you think that the second will attract workers away from the first, by better pay, working conditions, and cultural facilities? How will you decide who lives in which sector?" Again JP bowed his head and said, "Probably you are right. I don't know the answer to that. Perhaps if we succeed in filling people with our ideals they will be willing to accept a somewhat lower standard of living for the sake of other values."

In his generation of political leaders, JP is a bit of a maverick. He was educated neither in England—not in Oxford or Cambridge, nor under the influence of Harold Laski at the London School of Economics—nor in the domestic schools of India, but in the United States. Born in a tiny village in the state of Bihar, he saw—according to Yusuf Meherally, his good friend and co-worker in the Socialist movement—"a tram-car for the first time when he was nineteen years old." Although he had received a university scholarship, he gave it up in order to throw himself into the non-cooperation movement of 1921. "I . . . was one of the thousands of young men of those days" he recalls "who, like leaves in a storm, were swept away and momentarily lifted up to the skies. That brief experience of soaring up with the winds of a great idea left imprints on the inner being that time and much familiarity with the ugliness of reality have not removed." The following year he decided to go to the United States for study. Since his young wife was sick at the time, he left her with Gandhi at his Sabarnati Ashram where, in the course of time, she became, in Gandhi's words, his "hostage from the Socialist camp." All in all he remained in America for eight years, during that time studying at five different universities and earning his living as a regular "working stiff"—farmhand, packer in a jam factory, mechanic, waiter, salesman.

IT IS a pleasing irony that it was in the United States—at the University of Wisconsin, to be exact—that this greatest of Indian Socialists first acquired his Socialism and his Marxism. Although he had studied natural science at the University of California and then biology at the University of Iowa, he found his *métier* at Wisconsin. He came into contact with a Socialist professor and a group of radical students—some European and some Jewish, as he recalls—who had a decisive influence on his life. His inchoate feelings about what was wrong with the world were suddenly brought into focus by Marx's critique of capitalist society. "I think we left nothing unread of Marxism that was then available in the English language and with the help of a brilliant student of German even read some of the untranslated Marxian classics." He also came across the writings of M. N. Roy, the famous Indian revolutionary. (Roy was once a member of the Executive Committee of the Communist International, but was later expelled as a "right-wing Bukharinite." Roy, too, moved far from his original Marxism, eventually becoming the leader of the "radical humanist" movement, which opposed political

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parties and the centralisation of power.) Shifting then to the social sciences, JP wrote his M.A. thesis in economics.

In 1929 he returned to India as, in his words, "an intellectual adherent of the Communist International." With a foreign degree in hand, he had a choice of careers, but eyes only for politics. The Indian Communist Party did not attract him, however, and he was quickly taken into the Labour Department of the Congress movement. By 1932, when the Civil Disobedience Movement started, JP found himself Acting General Secretary of the Congress. He was arrested, given a one-year sentence, and sent to Nasik Jail.

PRISON turned out to be an unexpected boon. Through some benign disposition of fate, JP found himself in the company of Asoka Mehta, Minoo Masani, M. L. Dantwala, and other young radicals who, like him, were dissatisfied with the "softness" of the official Congress policy. According to one description of that period: "There was a growing dissatisfaction among the youth with the compromise policies of the Congress high command and the vagueness of the economic and social programmes of the Congress. This was swelling the ranks of the terrorists and anarchists.... In many parts of the country, especially in Bengal, misunderstood Marxism was taking to sporadic terrorist outbursts which only tightened the grip of bureaucratic repression." So they spent their time working out plans for a Socialist group within the Congress. Soon after their release in 1933, they established the Congress Socialist Party, the forerunner of the present Praja Socialist Party, at a convention in Patna. Considering themselves "true Marxist-Leninists," as against the corrupt Marxism-Leninism of the Indian Communist Party, they stood four-square for the dictatorship of the proletariat, centralised state planning, collectivisation of agriculture, etc.

The Socialist strategy was to stiffen Congress policy from within, a policy which they felt had been responsible for the collapse of the 1932 Civil Disobedience Movement. Objecting to the terms on which Congress was willing to participate in the elections of 1936, JP resigned from the Congress Working Committee to which he had been appointed.

When the Second World War broke out in 1939, the Indian nationalists found themselves in an ambiguous position. Anxious to take advantage of England's difficulties, many, especially "progressives" and "anti-Fascists," were yet troubled that to do so might weaken England against the Nazis. The conflicts that developed among the pro-war party, the anti-war party, the pro-Japanese party, and those in favour of conditional support of the Allies have left their mark in Indian political life even to this day. JP and the Socialists were on the anti-war side. "For our part," he said, "we do not wish to embarrass or create difficulties for the United Nations. But we cannot help it if our war of liberation comes in the way. If it does, it is not our fault, but theirs. ... After we are free we shall march shoulder to shoulder with them in an assault on all kinds of oppression and brutality—Nazi, imperialist, capitalist." Therefore, in 1939, JP was arrested for a seditious speech in the steel-manufacturing city of Jamshedpur. Released after one year, he was immediately re-arrested at the prison gates. The charge was interfering with the war effort. "Regarding the speech for which I am being prosecuted," he said at his trial in 1940, "I cannot say how far it succeeded in achieving its ends. But nothing would please me more than to learn that it did have some success in impeding the effective prosecution of the war. I shall deem the heaviest punishment well earned if I am found to have succeeded in this." He was convicted and sent to the prison of the great Rajput fortress of Deoli.

In Deoli began the series of incidents that turned JP into a national hero. Finding conditions in the prison unbearable, he led several hundred political prisoners on a hunger strike. The strike lasted thirty-one days, aroused the entire country, and finally forced the Government to yield to their demands.

By 1942, JP had been transferred to Hazari-

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bagh Central Jail in Bihar. The Japanese stood at the gates of India, having taken over all of Burma, and the Indian nationalists were frustrated by their inability either to defend themselves, if it proved necessary, against the Japanese or to take advantage of Britain's weakness to win their freedom. In this atmosphere, the Congress decided to accept Gandhi's proposal for a civil disobedience campaign, the famous "quit India" movement. Gandhi and other Congress leaders were immediately arrested. The public reaction was a tremendous outburst of violence and sabotage, very much against Gandhi's intentions, in which Socialists took a leading part.

Frustrated to find himself in jail when a real "revolution" was under way, JP made a dramatic escape in September. Along with five others, he broke out of prison, scaled the prison walls by means of a ladder made up of *dhotis* tied together, and made his way to freedom. A reward of Rs. 5,000 later raised to Rs. 10,000, was announced for his capture. After several months of secret revolutionary work, JP was compelled to move his base of operations to Nepal, where he helped start Azad Dasta, or the Army of Liberation. However, tracked down to Nepal, he was again retaken. On the way to detention in British India, the police party was attacked by a band of guerrilla fighters from the Azad Dasta, and JP together with Ram Manohar Lohia (leader of a splinter Socialist Party today) escaped. But once again, after several months of underground revolutionary activity against the British, he was recaptured in September 1943, and imprisoned in Lahore Fort. The victory of the Labour Party in 1945 brought high hopes, but much to the dismay of Indian Socialists, it was not until April 1946 that he and Lohia were released from prison.

III

THROUGHOUT these years of excitement, JP's thinking was undergoing slow and steady changes. His lodestar remained, as always, the staple ideals of the French Revolution, which his University of Wisconsin days had convinced him could only be achieved through revolution in our time. But for JP, "revolution" has always meant something almost mystic: not simply violence—although violence was, however regrettably, the "midwife of progress"; nor a mere transformation of institutions and economic structure; but a genuine transvaluation of values that must penetrate each and every individual. This is what had always attracted him in Gandhi's idea of the "double revolution"—first in the individual and then, outward from the individual, in society. But for a long time, "I could not see," said JP, "how this non-violent technique could bring about a social revolution." Furthermore, although he had no doubts that Gandhi was devoted to freedom, he was less sure of Gandhi's devotion to Socialism and equality. As a pious Hindu, Gandhi had for a long time supported the caste system. In 1927, he even objected to the marriage of his son, Devadas, to the daughter of the great Rajgopalachari, on the grounds that they were of different caste. It was not until the 1930's that Ghandi placed the abolition of caste in the forefront of his programme. (His son's marriage was permitted in 1933.) "Roy's writings ... persuaded me," JP wrote many years later, "that Gandhiji was against the social revolution and would at a moment of crisis hasten to uphold the system of exploitation and inequality."

Therefore, Gandhi's leadership of Congress always seemed too slow to him. In 1940, for example, when Gandhi started his "individual satyagraha" campaign, JP, then still in Deoli prison, attacked him on the grounds that the situation was ripe for a revolutionary assault on British power, not just individual disobedience. His criticism of the civil disobedience movement of 1942 was that the Congress leadership lacked the determination to carry through a revolution. And when independence was imminent, JP still felt that it could not be "truly" achieved without a revolution, even though the British were prepared to grant it. "I entirely agree that freedom is round the corner," he wrote, "but let

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me emphasise that before we achieve freedom an all-out struggle is necessary.... A revolution has... become necessary." Even to-day, in becoming a Gandhian, JP has not given over his revolutionary ideas: he has simply come to feel that Gandhianism is the best "practical technique of revolution."

THE thirty years of his active intellectual and political life have carried JP a long way from Marxism-Leninism through what he calls the "half-way house of democratic Socialism" to pure Gandhianism. The course of this change will sound a familiar echo. At first, there were the tactical and strategic doubts. "A time will come," he says, reflecting on it to-day, "when the gravest of Stalin's mistakes—the costliest and the most criminal —would be pronounced to be the disruptive policies which he followed that made it possible for Hitler to seize power. Had not the German Communists declared, under Stalin's inspiration, the Social Democrats to be 'enemy number one' and the Nazi enemy only second to them, Hitler could never have become the master of Germany, and the Nazi terror and World War II would never have happened." Then, the shock of the Moscow Trials and the execution of all the great revolutionary heroes of his youth. But, in the end, what finally changed his mind was his own personal experience. Against the better judgment of his closest associates and friends, he led the Congress Socialist Party into a united Socialist-Communist front. "The disastrous consequences of that policy are well known," he now admits frankly, "one of which, incidentally, was that the whole of the South was lost to the Communist Party. But that nightmarish experience... taught us a great lesson in politics... (although) perhaps the price paid was too high."

From his first tentative feeling that "in a society where it was possible for people by democratic means to bring about social change, it would be counter-revolutionary to resort to violence," he went on to the more drastic conclusion that "the path to Socialism did not pass through dictatorship at any point." But what had happened in the Soviet Union could not simply be blamed on the actions of evil individuals. The causes were the "over-centralisation of political and economic authority and total statism." It was a "political system that evolved from the drive to develop at breakneck speed a backward country threatened by foreign aggression and in face of internal resistance." The determination to use democratic methods alone will not prevent this: "beyond a certain limit the pace itself would give rise necessarily to conditions of dictatorship." These considerations led JP to "ideas of decentralisation and the gradual attenuation of the State and the fashioning of alternative forms of collective behaviour and control."

"Having already rejected the use of violence under democratic conditions as counter-revolutionary," he recalls, "I was naturally left only with the traditional Socialist method of bringing about the social revolution. At the same time the gaping inadequacies of that method and the poor quality of the results... put me in a questioning mood." It was at this point that the decisive turning-point in JP's life came, and from an entirely unexpected direction.

In 1951, Vinoba Bhave, Gandhi's spiritual heir, began the Bhoodan, or land-gift movement. Setting out to solve India's agrarian problem by collecting fifty million of India's three hundred million arable acres and redistributing them to needy peasants, it was also conceived as a movement of "spiritual regeneration." Independent of government action in the field of land reform, it set out to collect land by persuasion, to convert the hearts of the rich and the mighty, to give new hope to the needy, to develop village self-rule and village autonomy. In spite of the suspicions of the political parties and the doubts of the economists, Jayaprakash found himself deeply stirred, and in 1953 he persuaded the Praja Socialist Party to adopt a resolution of support. About that time he paid a visit to Vinoba in the Banda District of Uttar Pradesh State and came away more impressed than ever. But he had to leave in order to start on a scheduled three-week fast in the city of Poona. In answer to the raised

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eyebrows of some of his party comrades, JP wrote: "... This fast has been for me a cleansing experience. I claim no more than that and I think it could not have done any harm to the party ... each day brought new inner strength and sometimes an unanticipated experience." Immediately afterwards, he plunged himself into the Bhoodan movement and to his surprise, he succeeded in a week of effort in raising gifts of seven thousand acres in his home state of Bihar, mainly from small holders. It was this experience that persuaded him that Gandhianism was a practical method of peaceful revolution, leading ultimately to true self-rule and to the stateless, classless society which had been his ideal ever since he embraced Marxism. His *jeevan-dan* at Bodh Gaya came soon after.

But for Jayaprakash, this did not mean a turning back on his own ideals, only a search for new methods. His conversion made explicit his growing feeling that a true social revolution requires the inner transformation of man and of society, not merely a change in institutional arrangements and intelligent direction from a superior élite. With India increasingly committed to heavy industrialisation, a rapid pace of industrial development, centralisation, and planning, JP felt that a stand had to be taken against these trends. As he put it to me in 1954:

"In India, people must learn to take responsibility for their own affairs: to solve their own problems individually and collectively; to rely upon themselves rather than upon some benevolent power—even if it be the Welfare State. To do this, people must have a sense of personal dignity and worth; they must feel that what they do and say has meaning, carries weight; they must know that they are loved and that their love is wanted; they must have a sense of participation in the affairs of society and the state. When you have throughout the country a network of strong individuals who are able to work on their own behalf, who can cooperate with each other, and who are able to express themselves, then individual liberty has the base—economic and psychological—from which to stand up to the power of the modern state. Now you may not agree with our specific proposals. You may not agree with *'gram-raj'* (village rule), with 'village self-sufficiency,' with non-dependence on money. But we feel that the psychological climate that these ideas create is important, whether the ideas ever achieve reality or not. Our Indian peasants need the personal hand of love, not bureaucratic technical operations, no matter how well intentioned. They have been for so long frozen within their caste boundaries, exploited by hordes of *zamindari*, and ordered around by bureaucrats—Indian as well as British—they must be awakened to the realisation that they are human beings, that they can act for themselves, and that they are worth something in the eyes of God and man."

At the time of his *jeevan-dan*, JP announced that he was retiring from politics. But although he had withdrawn from active leadership of the Praja Socialist Party, he continued his membership and kept himself available for consultation. He has also taken a public stand on a number of issues that are certainly political by any reasonable definition. In 1955 he strongly condemned Mr. Nehru for the police brutality against demonstrating students in the city of Patna. He also made public statements on the states reorganisation issue, expressing his disagreement with the Government. And in November 1956 he came out strongly against the Government's "double standard of international morality," which condemned the British and French in Suez but condoned the Russians in Hungary. Even more clearly political was his controversial advocacy of electoral arrangements between the Praja Socialist Party and other opposition parties including the Communists, which opened him to the charge of "playing politics" in its narrowest sense. But although many people sneer that this is a far cry from "renouncing politics," JP is not afraid to acknowledge the contradiction. Even if one has retired from politics, he argues, one cannot entirely disregard it. "For good or ill (it) does to some

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extent influence the life of the people. It shall be my concern from the outside to see that that influence is as salutary as possible." Therefore it is not surprising to find him extremely preoccupied these days with the weakness of parliamentary democracy. "Although I do not think," he told me, "that parliamentary democracy is the most suitable method for India, what bothers me is that its breakdown will not, I feel, lead to a Gandhian development." It may, as he said in 1956 in a letter to the Executive Committee of the Praja Socialist Party, "prepare the ground . . . for a one-party government, which would be a tragedy for India and perhaps also for Asia. I, therefore, do not find any inconsistency in working for a non-party democracy and at the same time wishing the success of parliamentary democracy. Every informed person to-day is aware of the serious drawbacks and limitations of the latter system, but that is no reason, without creating a better alternative system, to let the present experiment fail. . . ." The defence of parliamentary democracy, therefore, still remains important to JP, and he has not been able to cut himself as completely from politics as he would have liked.

JP's main preoccupation is the development of non-state and non-party forms of democracy. This means that people start tackling their problems immediately, without waiting for government action, and living their ideals —by co-operation, by non-violence, by renunciation of inordinate ambition. If a village has a problem to solve—raising the standard of living or a more equitable distribution of the land—a start must be made without waiting for official intervention. The people of the village must be brought together to understand the common problem and work out a common solution. But, for this, "a certain ideological change has to be brought about, a . . . revolution has to be brought about in the lives of the people and in the minds of the people." If this prior condition is not met, then community action will simply follow traditional pathways created by the power cleavages of caste and class. Therefore the "double revolution" is needed: first in the minds of men, to prepare them to meet the problems; then in the community, where the new climate sets the stage for the actual working out of the problems.

In the Bhoodan movement, for example, the central act is the giving up of land. People with land are called upon to give some to people without. But this action, however essential, is only the first link in a long chain. The act of giving creates a new atmosphere in the village; both giver and receiver enter a new relation, one based on friendship, compassion, and kindness. The problems that immediately arise on the receipt of the land gift must be worked out in common: how should the land be divided; who gets what land; how can the pieces of land, often widely dispersed, be consolidated into workable economic units? Now, this experience of working out problems in common is itself a decisive one for the Indian village. Hitherto decisions have always been made by outsiders, rulers, landlords, the Government; now the people must learn to manage their own affairs. In this way the people will be set in motion, and traditional passivism and inertia will be overcome. People who have lived lives of humiliation will learn confidence in themselves. Members of different castes, who would otherwise never know each other, come together in an atmosphere of shared purpose. They learn to accept a common responsibility for their actions.

What kind of society will all this lead to? JP has, like Gandhi, come around to the view that India should not mechanically imitate the experience of the West—and of Russia—with its industrial gigantism, the horrors of urban living, and the uprooting of the people from organic connection with their environment. This may mean a slower-paced, low-key economic development, one which requires a "voluntary limitation of wants." "I do not believe," JP once said to me, "that the American people are necessarily happy with all of their abundance, with the constant cut-throat competition, with the constant striving to pile on more and more

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material goods. Restraint and voluntary limitation may be the necessary conditions for a democratic, co-operative life."

But JP observes with some misgivings that the Bhoodan movement has not advanced as rapidly these past few years as the opposite trends of centralisation and large-scale industrial planning. When JP made his *jeevan-dan* in 1954, the Bhoodan movement could proudly announce that it had overfulfilled its land-gift quota, and there seemed a reasonable prospect that Vinoba would raise his fifty million acres in the five-year period he had set for himself. But to-day, this goal remains far in the future, and the gifts have stabilised at somewhere just under five million acres. The original enthusiasm has given way to the soberer practical and organisational problems of redistribution, readjustment of scattered land parcels to make them workable, development of co-operative methods, and raising the educational level of illiterate peasants and landless workers.

So JP is never as far *out* of politics as he would like, nor as far *in* as his friends would like. He once wrote to his Socialist friends, "We have worked together and together we have suffered imprisonment, lived through the adventures of the underground, and tasted the ashes of independence." One wonders if now, after the ashes of Socialist politics, he is about to taste the ashes of Bhoodan. But for JP, it is the struggle itself that is worthwhile, whatever the outcome. Addressing himself recently to people who look upon Bhoodan as "a kind of humanitarian movement, a kind of idealistic movement which will not have much influence on the future of the country, which you might think is in itself not a bad thing but will not achieve anything substantial," JP spoke with his usual frankness. "It may be so. I do not know. If it is so . . . if this movement ends up in failure, then I would respectfully say that the chances of democracy in India being safe become still more slim and slender."

Rex Taylor

The Field

HALF of the field was light,
And half was shade
That one tall chestnut
Midfield made.

Always, no matter where
The sun chanced to be,
There was a shadow cast
By the chestnut tree.

How like myself
Is this field, well-known,
With joy and with grief
Equally sown.

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A. L. Rowse

Late Evening at East Hampton in Long Island
(*for Dorothy Quick*)

Here are the dunes, upon them the last of the sun
Going down beyond Long Island Sound,
A shadow-sedged mere among them,
Mirrored light and sombre shadow—
An Harpignies' *Crépuscule*;
A multitudinous tongued congregation
Of settling dune-birds all around,
The lapse and sigh of the receding tide—
As it might be Cornwall, and Perranporth
Looking towards America, as this place
Looks back across the seas to home.
Here the Shinnecock Indians, first settlers,
Had all their menfolk lost at sea:
The level inlets and the level lands—
One upsurge from the Ocean would sweep
Over all, obliterating fields and farms
And all the careful garnered landmarks.
Turn down Lily Pond road to smell
The scent of resin in the leaning pines,
The aromatic sweetgrass, the shorn
And nibbled turf, sand underfoot.
Follow the rail-fence rambled by roses,
There golden rod stands in rank like soldiers,
Catching the reflected glow from the west.
The dune-birds are quieter now,
A single pipe of a wild canary awake.
An arch of coloured raincloud spans
Amagansett, where the rainbow comes to rest.
Last light burns in windows looking west
Before a sudden hand
Extinguishes the land
And night falls dark
On the loneliness that is America.

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J. W. N. Watkins

Is Political Philosophy Dead?

AFTER two and a half thousand years of lusty existence, the tradition of classical political philosophy is now nearly defunct. If anything can be said to have taken its place, it is analyses of political and moral words on the one hand, and of political machinery on the other. Before I try to explain this change I want to say something about the way classical political philosophers went about their job. Their problems were mostly created for them by the social upheavals and political anxieties of their own day. But there was nothing stop-gap or provincial about their solutions. They responded to their problems like a 16th-century courtier who decides to relieve his government's financial difficulties, not by proposing a new tax or some other *ad hoc* measure, but by sailing away in search of distant treasure. His voyage may not achieve its original purpose, but it will probably achieve something else more important.

What the classical political philosophers brought home from their explorations of nature, knowledge, morality, society, law, and authority, and welded together into a system, was usually intended—Bentham is an exception—not as a *code* of political behaviour, but as a framework for practical moral and political thinking. Here are some of the questions they asked. Their traditional opening question has been, What sort of creatures are men? This question is partly empirical, partly philosophical. It leads on to questions like: How do men stand to the rest of nature? Are they in self-control or are they externally determined? Is their behaviour predictable? Can it be scientifically controlled? Are men essentially lonely or have they sympathetic access to each other's minds? How do men arrive at decisions? How important for society are the unintended by-products of their decisions? Do men's decisions determine the course of history or is history shaped by large impersonal factors? Do men sometimes give rise to institutions which are wiser than themselves? When are social disorders self-correcting and when are they self-aggravating? What sort of society is most friendly to the advance of knowledge? What institutions best embody the procedures of rational enquiry? What kinds of knowledge about society are possible? How much of such knowledge can be centralised and used by political administrators and how much has to remain diffused through a society? Is rational and benevolent authoritarianism possible? If so, how does its moral status compare with that of liberal democracy?

I do not say that all English-speaking philosophers have stopped asking this sort of question. Professor Michael Oakeshott was provoked by the pretensions of post-war planners to investigate the part premeditation actually plays in practical activities, especially politics. And in *The Open Society and its Enemies*, a war-inspired book, my teacher, Professor Karl Popper, applied a theory about the method and advancement of knowledge

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to theories of social development and political reform with powerful results.

But Oakeshott and Popper are pretty exceptional. I can see no *political* reason for the very general neglect of political philosophy by modern English philosophers. After all, during the last fifty years we have witnessed social movements quite as large and quite as ominous as those which stirred the classical political philosophers. No, the reason lies, I believe, in the character of contemporary linguistic philosophy. I do not know of any substantial positive contribution to political thought by linguistic philosophers; and those few among them who have briefly examined classical political philosophy seem to have done so determined to fail it because it does not fit into any of their pigeon-holes. In an article significant enough to be reprinted in *Logic and Language* (First Series), the late Miss Margaret Macdonald explained that the "puzzles" of political philosophers—what a misunderstanding of men like Plato and Hobbes and Spinoza to suppose they were trying to clear up puzzles!—arose because they used ordinary language in an extra-ordinary way. In particular, they turned the sensible and specific question, "Why should I support *this* government?" into the senseless general question, "Why should I support *any* government?" Candidates failed for bad logical grammar include Plato, Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, and Laski. Now Plato, Rousseau, and Laski, far from constructing an ideological apparatus for inspiring obedience to *any* government, advocated large reforms, and Locke made provision for the *withdrawal* of support from governments which misbehave. Hobbes did not advocate obedience to *any* government, but to governments which do not threaten your life; and there is nothing senseless about that. Never was such a high-handed purge based on such a lighthearted misunderstanding.

In *The Vocabulary of Politics*, Mr. T. D. Weldon again declares that the whole of classical political philosophy rests on mistakes —this time, quite different mistakes. Alas, his attempts to expose those alleged mistakes contain glaring new errors. He alleges that one of the mistakes of classical philosophy was to suppose that something follows from "high abstractions" like "Men are always to be treated as ends and never as means." Yet no philosopher has held that men are never to be treated as means for the good reason that this rule would be not vacuous, but intolerably severe—to pick an example at random, it would prohibit the employing of solicitors. The attitude of these linguistic debunkers of classical political philosophy puts me in mind of a remark made by James Mill. After devoting a whole week to the study of Kant he declared, "I see well enough what poor Kant would be at."

Here is a more subtle attempt to undermine classical political philosophy. Mr. J. M. Cameron has recently alleged that Hobbes (perhaps the most penetrating and systematic political philosopher of modern times) was not (despite every appearance to the contrary) a reasoner but a sort of poetic dramatist: the connections in his thought "are connexions of aesthetic appropriateness rather than of logical implication," his ideas possess "enduring charm" but are neither true nor false. How times change! It would have been rash to try this line on Lord Clarendon, say, or Bishop Bramhall. Hobbes's contemporaries were scandalised by his tough-minded and rigorously logical investigation into the mysteries of authority and they regarded his ideas as both false and repulsive.

The thinking of the classical political philosophers moved at various levels and through various areas. It was connected, cross-fertilised, systematic, synoptic. The tendency of analytic moral philosophy today is in the opposite direction. A *cordon sanitaire* keeps it uncontaminated by psychology, anthropology, economics, philosophy of history, theory of institutions, or political theory. And the analyst's technique of pinning down bits of verbal behaviour involves treating moral discourse itself like a catalogue of slogans. In short, the linguistic philosopher believes that instead of blundering around the universe, as the classical political philosophers

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did, he ought to confine himself to the analysis of troublesome words. Why does he believe this? This question is not easy to answer, but it is worth trying.

II

KANT classified propositions in two ways. First, he distinguished between *a priori* propositions whose truth is logically prior to, or independent of, experience, and *a posteriori* propositions whose truth is posterior to, or dependent on, experience. He also distinguished between *synthetic* propositions which inform us about the world, and *analytic* statements which do not and which are true in virtue of logic and the meanings of their terms. Now analytic truths, like "All bachelors are unmarried," are always true *a priori*; and *a posteriori* propositions grounded in experience, like "Some bachelors are unshaven," are always synthetic because they inform us about the world. But there is a third possibility, in which Kant, like all the great rationalist philosophers, believed: namely, truths about the world known by reason alone—synthetic *a priori* truths.

Geometry was taken as the splendid example of synthetic *a priori* truth. Geometry had always been regarded by rationalist thinkers like Plato, Euclid, and Descartes as a *factual* science, as the science of the framework of reality. But in the 19th century it was found that one of Euclid's postulates could be altered. Various sets of postulates were found possible and various geometries were derived from them. It now became an empirical question which of these different geometries fitted the physical light-rays of the real world. Then, on top of this, Russell and Whitehead's *Principia Mathematica* showed that the rest of mathematics could be derived from purely logical notions. Euclid had supposed that he was inferring the nature of space from self-evident axioms. It was now seen that he had only been drawing out the logical consequences of one of a number of alternative sets of axioms. From a single system of synthetic *a priori* truth, the queen of the sciences, geometry subsided into a family of analytic system of axioms and theorems. Rationalist metaphysics underwent a worse humiliation. Mathematics did remain a valued servant of the sciences. But it was declared that metaphysicians who had supposed themselves to be describing the basic constituents of reality were actually merely defining the basic words in a formal and useless system of their own arbitrary construction.

A priori knowledge has become a ghost of its former self. The substance has gone out of it. And this has had large repercussions. It is no use, now, lighting a pipe of hashish and retiring to contemplate the ultimate. Hashish might (I do not advocate it) give you a new idea about the world; but you would have to go into the world to test its validity. Another casualty is the classical Rationalist theory of freedom. On this theory nothing is free which is determined from without; it is free only if it is self-determining. An angry man is not free, for he has been externally provoked. Nor is a man free whose thinking is at the empirical level, for his thoughts, according to this theory, are generated by the external world impinging on his sense-organs. The only man who is free on this theory of freedom is the man engaged in *a priori* thinking, for only *a priori* thinking is self-determining and autonomous. While the synthetic *a priori* was still alive, this meant that a man is free when his passions are stilled by his intellectual understanding of reality. Today it would mean that he is free only when he is manufacturing tautologies, which is a bit far-fetched.

THE idea of synthetic and necessary truth has been flogged to death and I shall not try to revive it. Empiricist-minded philosophers have concluded that only analytic and empirical statements remain as genuine, true-or-false statements. I believe that this conclusion is erroneous. But before I criticise it I want first to explain the present state of moral philosophy in England in terms of this doctrine that all genuine statements must be analytic or empirical. I shall do this simply by combining that doctrine's implications for the character of philosophy with its implications for the status of moral utterances.

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If philosophers leave it to scientists and historians and common sense to make empirical statements about the world, and if the only other kind of statement is analytic, then philosophical statements must be analytic, must have to do with language. Three main branches of linguistic analysis have developed. First, analysis of the internal syntax or logical grammar of a language; secondly, semantical analysis of the relations between language and extra-linguistic facts; and thirdly, analysis of the pragmatic uses of language.

Now consider the implications of the "analytic/empirical" dichotomy for moral utterances. In his text-book on analytic philosophy Professor Pap has said that ethical questions "are either questions of fact or else questions of analysis or definition." This means that cruelty is wrong only if I choose to define "wrong" to cover "cruelty"—which seems a shocking doctrine. But it is easy to see how it arose. In the past, moral intuitions were, like Euclid's axioms, often regarded as synthetic *a priori* truths. But the analytic philosopher is sure that what used to masquerade as synthetic *a priori* truth is really analytic, made true by definition. On this Humpty-Dumpty belief in the purely conventional meaning of moral terms, the question, in the event of moral disagreement, becomes, "which is to be Master?"—that's all.

Most analytical philosophers, however, would say that moral utterances cannot be reduced to empirical or to analytic statements and fall right outside the two-fold class of true-or-false statements. This means that there cannot be any moral properties to which moral adjectives like "evil" refer, for if there were, moral judgments like "Hitler is evil" *would* be true-or-false. So there cannot be any semantical analysis of moral terms —they refer to nothing. But analysis of the logical grammar and the pragmatic uses of moral language is possible; and moral philosophy has come to consist of just this. Some years ago the emphasis was on the command-like and propagandist functions of moral utterances; latterly it has been on their grammar. I have said that this linguistic approach has broken up and impoverished the old tradition of political philosophy. We now find that this approach is dictated by the assumption that all genuine statements are analytic or empirical. So let us haul up this dichotomy for inspection.

DURING the last few years this dichotomy has come in for a lot of intensive criticism. But it seems to me that the critics have mostly trained their guns—and they are heavy guns—on the wrong target. It is the notion of *analyticity* to which they have objected on the ground that it is ineradicably vague—whereas they ought, in my view, to have attacked the empiricist's notion of a factual or synthetic statement on the ground that it is demonstrably too narrow. It does not matter, for my present argument, whether "analytic" is vague in a vicious way or not, so I will only say, here, that I am not persuaded that it is. Among its critics I find myself most in agreement with Dr. Waismann who, as well as pointing to difficulties in the notion of analytic truths, has also suggested that the deeper difficulties are rather connected with the idea of an empirical or factual statement. Moreover, he has not been content to point out general difficulties, but has advanced a number of strong counter-examples to the contention that all true statements are either verbally true or empirically testable, counter-examples which lead him to question the exhaustiveness of this simple twofold classification. "Is there," he asks, "room for a third class of statements as yet overlooked by the theorists who have drawn this distinction?"

I have tried to prove elsewhere that the answer to this question is, Yes. I have tried to show that there is a perfectly straightforward kind of statement which is factual and true-or-false but which can never be verified or tested. Such a statement may, it is true, be "confirmed" by experience, but only in a spurious way. It is compatible with any experience whatever, makes no observable difference. It does this by asserting a peculiar kind of correlation. It tells you that, corresponding to instances of one kind of thing,

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there somewhere exist instances of another kind of thing related to the former in a certain way. But *where* these related entities exist and how they could be located this kind of statement leaves shadowy and uncertain. Most myths have this form—for instance, the myth that everybody has a soul-mate or the myth that it is unlucky to walk under ladders. Experience cannot refute these myths. They receive a spurious sort of confirmation each time a man marries a romantically perfect wife and each time a man who walks under a ladder has his house burgled or sprains his ankle. But a man who is driven to divorce the only woman he ever wanted to marry, and a man who walks cheerfully under ladders without seeming to come to any harm, do not constitute a refutation of these two myths. The first myth asserts that a soul-mate does indeed await this disgruntled ex-husband, only he has not come across her yet. The second asserts that misfortune does indeed await this rash walker-under-ladders, only it has not descended on him yet—and even if he passes unscathed through the remainder of his life he will eventually have the supreme misfortune of dying.

Now it so happens that most of the more important metaphysical beliefs which have exerted so much influence on the development of western science and culture possess this form. Popper has always insisted that *scientific* hypotheses tell you what you will *not* find—that you will never find a metal which fails to expand on being heated, for example. What these metaphysical theories tell you is that something exists which you *may* find. If you do stumble on instances of what it alleges to exist, well and good—the theory is "unconfirmed." But if you come across very few instances, or no instances at all, that only shows that the universe is a big place which you cannot hope to explore at all thoroughly.

One important rôle which such metaphysical beliefs play is to act as regulative principles in scientific research. Consider a biologist whose research is governed by the belief that all organic processes will eventually be explained physically, that to every biological event there corresponds a physical explanation. He would be a pusillanimous fellow if he surrendered this belief just because one attempt to explain an organic process by some physical model breaks down. He may cling to this belief even if repeated attempts break down, always trusting that he will eventually stumble upon the physical model which does the trick. But let one of his attempts succeed and his confidence in his regulative belief will be wonderfully invigorated. This shows how the logic of regulative beliefs differs from the logic of the scientific hypotheses they help to shape. One definite empirical refutation of a scientific hypothesis outweighs any amount of confirmation. But some dramatic "confirmation" of a regulative belief will outweigh a much larger amount of discouraging (though not, of course, refuting) evidence. During the hey-day of determinism, for instance, the kinds of events which could be predicted with impressive precision were far fewer than those which could not be predicted at all.

Now the fact that these regulative beliefs are not controlled by the empirical findings of the research which they inspire means that they can only be unseated by rethinking. But if a programme for scientific advance has been spectacularly successful the metaphysics behind it may acquire too much authority. One of the weapons in the metaphysical offensive which blasted the way for the scientific revolution in the 17th century was the doctrine that there are no final causes and that all change is caused by, that to every change there corresponds, some visible or invisible body pushing a neighbouring body. This is a typically metaphysical doctrine. It gets "confirmed" all right—every time I push the coffee-pot towards my wife; but it can never get refuted. True, you cannot *see* anything pushing a falling stone downwards—but the doctrine says that there must be something invisible pushing the stone downwards. This metaphysical doctrine that there can be no action at a distance acquired enormous prestige. But if Newton had been unable to disengage himself from it, however unwill-

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ingly, we might still be confined within Descartes' vortices. One sign that a regulative belief is acquiring too much authority is that philosophers, being unable to see any alternative to it, declare it to be vacuous. That is the positivist's way. Professor Polanyi has done as much as anyone to reveal the character and importance of the regulative beliefs of modern science. Unhappily, he has repelled many people by trying to elevate them into a scientist's *credo*—like the positivist, though for opposite reasons, he too would withdraw them from critical reappraisal. Yet he gives many disturbing examples of the very harmful influence regulative beliefs can have if they are held unconsciously and uncritically.

THE upshot of all this is that we have to scrap the naïve doctrine that all genuine statements fall into one of two classes, analytic or empirical, one the concern of the logician, the mathematician, and the philosopher, the other the concern of the historian and the scientist. The historian and the scientist are not only empirical investigators but, like the rest of us, metaphysicians as well.

I have traced the impoverishment of political philosophy to the doctrine that all statements must be analytic or empirical, and I have offered counter-examples to this doctrine. So far, my aim has been negative: I have tried to overthrow an assumption which has had a baleful influence. But the ideas to which I have been drawing attention as counter-examples—ideas which are neither analytic nor empirical—also have a positive significance for morals and politics. They may have a moral and political suggestiveness. But before I pursue this any further I want first to describe a feature of moral experience which the existence of these counter-examples to the "analytic/empirical" dichotomy helps to explain.

III

TWO facts a philosophy of morals has to account for are these. First, we are hardly free to alter our moral beliefs deliberately. A man may say, "I don't enjoy China tea at present but I'm trying to acquire a taste for it," but we should be shocked and puzzled to hear him say, "I don't approve of flogging but I'm trying to make myself do so." We do not so much make as recognise moral ideas. This is the great fact for which objectivist philosophers of morals have always tried to account. It is counter-balanced by the fact that moral beliefs do alter—for instance, under criticism. So that a philosophy of morals has to account for the double fact that moral beliefs are neither wilful and arbitrary nor self-evident and incorrigible.

Fifty years ago the prevailing view was that moral beliefs are the result of intuitions of value analogous to perceptions of colour. According to Dr. G. E. Moore, "our only means of deciding upon [a thing's] intrinsic value and its degree is by carefully distinguishing exactly what the thing is about which we ask the question, and then *looking to see* whether it has or has not the unique predicate 'good' in any of its various degrees." This ethical methodology makes moral beliefs non-arbitrary—at the cost of making them incorrigible: if I have *seen* the goodness in something, that's that and there is no room for arguments. During the 1930's there was a reaction to the opposite extreme. Professor Ayer who, as a logical empiricist, holds that all true-or-false statements are logical or empirical, declared that moral utterances are neither true nor false but manifestations of emotion—and so, by implication, as unarguable and impervious to criticism as emotional reactions. To some people at the time this seemed to mean that nothing is right or good. Ayer replied that his emotive theory, being a piece of philosophical analysis, was "neutral as regards all moral principles" and could not, therefore, entail the peculiar moral principle that nothing is right or good. But Ayer's contention that his old emotive theory was morally uninteresting and harmless is, alas, incorrect. If the facts are agreed but moral disagreement persists, the question to ask yourself is, "Is it perhaps I who am wrong?" On the emotive theory this question could only be construed as a manifesta-

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tion of divided feelings. The emotive theory cannot allow something which is both possible and desirable, namely, that someone who feels *unambiguously* about some moral issue should, at the same time, realise that he may nevertheless be wrong and that people who disagree with him may be critics deserving attention rather than enemies deserving abuse.

Now ethical objectivism, which asserts that moral proposals and decisions and principles are either right or wrong, *does* allow a man to ask himself whether he is perhaps wrong. But objectivism in ethics is not only unfashionable; it is widely condemned as positively vicious. It is accused of insinuating that, since moral truths are knowable, there will be experts in finding them out, moral bureaucrats to whom ordinary people can transfer the burden of personal decision.

There is some historical justification for this charge. Plato painted a heavenly system of objectivist ethics and Plato required ordinary people to be supervised by trained experts with a scientific knowledge of values. Yet the charge relies on a false analogy. The moral bureaucrat or life-expert corresponds to the applied scientist, the technologist, rather than to the enquiring scientist. Popper has contrasted the scientist who probes existing theories for weaknesses with the technologist who, by applying received theories in situations where they work, confirms them again and again, and tends, naturally enough, to develop an uncritical confidence in them. Now an objectivist philosophy of science supports the scientist's critical attitude against the technologist's contented attitude towards received scientific theories. An objectivist philosophy of science says that a scientific theory is not only a tool for manipulating nature but is, in addition, true or false. Thus a theory which works, even a theory which works wonders, may nevertheless be false: it remains open to criticism and may be superseded by a theory which is closer to the truth (without, perhaps, working any better). Similarly, an objectivist philosophy of morals does not necessarily underwrite the received principles which the official spokesmen of a society apply. It supports the critically minded person who, holding that moral principles are right or wrong, wonders how his own and his society's moral principles might be improved.

Like the emotive theory, though for opposite reasons, intuitionism fails to allow a man who has inspected and evaluated some sharply defined state of affairs to wonder whether his evaluation is perhaps wrong: having seen the goodness in it he cannot but feel sure that his evaluation is right. The intuitionist and the logical empiricist overshoot the mark in opposite directions because they share one erroneous assumption but combine it with opposite secondary assumptions. What they have in common is this, that they both treat moral notions as if they were atomic. Moore called his intuitionist method "the method of absolute isolation," and he held that a moral intuition is self-evident in the sense that it "is evident or true, *by itself* alone." And the logical empiricist's analytical method involves chopping up moral discourse and treating it as if it were a series of slogans, like "Thrift is a virtue." Now you cannot argue over an isolated proposition, for arguing would mean bringing up supporting and countering propositions which in this case do not exist. An isolated proposition can be tested, if at all, only by inspecting the state of affairs to which it refers. If I exclaim, "There's green in the sky!" you cannot argue about it, you can only inspect the sky yourself. But can we inspect the moral qualities mentioned by isolated moral assertions? Here the intuitionist and the logical empiricist part company. The intuitionist holds that we can inspect moral properties like goodness. The logical empiricist denies that there are any moral properties "out there" to be inspected —there are only internal feelings to be manifested.

We can avoid these extreme interpretations of moral notions as impervious to criticism because true and incorrigible or

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as impervious to criticism because neither true nor false if we remember two things. First, the moral ideas of ordinary people are not isolated and autarchic but usually cohere fairly well in a rudimentary system. People's views on sex, modern novels, the death penalty, co-education, and so on, usually hang together. It is this fact which makes ordinary moral arguments (as opposed to moral conversions) possible; for what mostly happens in this sort of argument is that the critic appeals from the agent's contemplated decision to other parts of the agent's scheme of beliefs and principles, or what he supposes these to be. I regard the classical political philosophers as thinkers who tried to push the ordinary person's half-hearted tendency to be systematic and consistent through all the ramifications of the serious problems they tried to solve.

The second thing to remember is that these systems of belief, whether rudimentary and inarticulate or comprehensive and coherent, whether belonging to a primitive African or an English judge or a Greek philosopher, are pretty sure to contain ingredients of the metaphysical kind which I described earlier. Being neither logical nor empirical, these ingredients are neither demonstrable nor refutable. This coherence of moral beliefs within an intellectual system containing beliefs, some of them indemonstrable and irrefutable, of various kinds and levels, means that moral beliefs cannot be self-evident and incorrigible. I shall show in a moment that it also means that moral beliefs *can* be more or less reliable, more or less open to criticism and revision, more or less reasonable.

I have said that metaphysical beliefs may have a moral or political suggestiveness. Let me illustrate this by an example. Consider the belief that accidents never happen, that there is some dark conspiracy behind every disaster. This is a regulative belief: it will regulate the way people investigate the causes of disasters. And it is metaphysical: it will be confirmed but it is irrefutable. It will not be overthrown if the police fail to nail a saboteur; but whenever what looked like an accident is found to be, or is made to appear to be, something more sinister, this belief will be "confirmed." Here is a true story, involving this belief, which illustrates how people's moral judgments get shaped by a background system of beliefs. Two natives went into the jungle to collect honey. One found a lot. The other found little and came home bewailing his rival's luck. But his rival had not been so lucky: on his return he had been attacked and killed by a lion. The tribesmen intuitively felt that this was no accident. Relatives asked the witch-doctor to detect the evil agency at work. After consulting the oracle he announced that the unsuccessful honey-gatherer had become envious of his rival's success and turned himself into a lion to give effect to his emotion. At first, the accused native stoutly resisted this accusation. But under questioning, his confidence began to ebb. Yes, he agreed that *someone* must have worked his rival's death. Yes, he had felt envious. Yes, he did acknowledge the divining-power of the oracle. The case against him seemed terribly consistent. A picture formed in his mind of the reconstructed scene, and this picture began to supplant his memories. Eventually he confessed. Polanyi, who quotes this incident, points out the analogy with Communist confessions. He also points out that this confession strengthened still further the natives' belief that what may appear to be an accident is really the doing of some sinister agency, making still more certain the fate of the next native unfortunate enough to find himself in a similar situation.

We disapprove of their punishing this unhappy native, not because our intuitions work differently or because we have a different emotional make-up, but because our moral beliefs have a different intellectual background, belong to a different *system* of beliefs. The fact that different people's moral beliefs are distorted in different directions by the systems of belief in which they inhere, the fact that ideologies intensify moral conflicts, is also, however, the very fact which makes conflicting moral beliefs amenable to criticism and, perhaps, to reconciliation. The difference between a system of beliefs

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and a collection of intuitions or slogans is like the difference between a battleship whose watertight doors are open and one whose watertight compartments are sealed. A system of strongly connected beliefs is dangerously exposed to criticism: damage from a hit at any point may spread throughout. But whereas battleships ought to be as unsinkable as possible, the reverse is true of ideas. We are not obliged to go down with our ideas and so we can afford to connect them together and expose a wide area to criticism. If criticism does strike home we can learn from it. And if our ideas pass the test of criticism despite their exposure, they have, in Popper's phrase, "proved their mettle."

THE most impressive examples of systematically argued moral and political judgments are the classic systems of morals and politics. I have described how modern linguistic philosophers have come to regard these systems as cumbersome dinosaurs hopelessly unfitted to survive linguistic analysis; and it will now be clear why I regard the replacement of the old synoptic approach by the analysis of isolated sentences as an intellectual disaster. In morals and politics as elsewhere, rational criticism can grip on to organised argument but is powerless against isolated assertions. I have not the space to reproduce a classic system here, so I will have to concoct an example to show how two contradictory political judgments fare, first when each is propounded in isolation, and then when each is the outcome of a supporting system of beliefs.

Let the judgments be, "There ought to be a law to stop discrimination against Negroes," together with its denial. If these two judgments are regarded as isolated and autonomous, the intuitionist may say that one of their authors is morally colour-blind, and the logical empiricist that the two authors are in emotional collision. But this is not helpful. "Whenever the arbitrary and the individualistic is particularly prejudicial," wrote the American philosopher C. S. Peirce, "there ... discourse of reason must be allowed as much play as possible." As we have seen, isolated assertions offer no scope for "discourse of reason."

Now suppose that the first judgment issues from a system containing the following assumptions. (1) "Negroes suffer as much as white men." This looks empirical; but all comparisons between the intensities of the feelings of different people are untestable and therefore metaphysical. (2) "People should not be penalised for differences over which they have no control." This is a moral principle. (3) "Politics is the art of translating moral principles into institutions." This is a persuasive definition. (4) "A sufficiently severe punishment can always be invented to deter men from any particular kind of behaviour." This is irrefutable, a piece of *a priori* psychology which is metaphysical in the sense I described earlier. (5) "All men (including legislators) are free to act as they think right." This is a philosophical theory.

Let the opposite judgment spring from a system containing the following assumptions. (This time I shall not indicate their status which will usually correspond to that of the counterpart assumption in the first system.) (1) "Negroes are pretty insensitive." (2) "Men's inborn differences establish a natural hierarchy which should be reflected in the social hierarchy." (3) "In politics good intentions usually have bad results." (4) "Some instincts no law can suppress." (5) "All men (including legislators) are determined by causes beyond their control."

Both judgments are now supported by considerations from psychology, sociology, history, ethics, philosophy, and metaphysics, and there is now a lot for argument to bite on.

BOTH the systems I have concocted contain moral principles, as indeed they must if I am not to be guilty of trying to derive moral conclusions from entirely non-moral premisses. And it may be objected that since there is no rational procedure for deciding between the conflicting moral principles which figure among my two sets of premisses, the difficulty which confronts the intuitionist when isolated intuitions conflict confronts me higher up.

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My reply is that while it is true that we cannot determine the validity of each separate premiss in a moral and political system, it is also true that we cannot determine the validity of each separate premiss in a scientific system. A scientific theory can only be tested as a whole. Its components, as Quine puts it, "face the tribunal of sense experience not individually but only as a corporate body." This means that if observations are unfavourable to a theory, any part of it may be maintained intact while alterations are made elsewhere. Preservation of a privileged component is quite common in the history of science. Dr. Hermann Weyl has said: "For a long time the laws of Euclidean geometry were held to be sacrosanct. The principles of the conservation of energy and momentum are of comparable, if not higher, stability. . . . In the practice of scientific research the clear-cut division into *a priori* and *a posteriori* in the Kantian sense is absent."

My critic might put a different objection. "You have escaped," he might say, "from the intuitionist theory that isolated moral truths are self-evident and incorrigible, and from the emotive theory that moral utterances only manifest feelings, into a sort of coherence theory according to which moral beliefs are neither self-evident nor arbitrary but more or less reliable according as they belong to a more or less criticisable and defensible system. But this, like all coherence theories, is open to the fatal objection that systems may be internally consistent but mutually incompatible."

They may indeed. I have no recipe for the moral unification of mankind. But then, neither has anybody a recipe for the unification of men's factual beliefs. Two internally consistent but mutually incompatible interpretations of observed facts or of historical events can exist with no procedure for deciding which is false. Consider the case of the native and the lion. No amount of additional field-work or armchair calculations would have resolved the disagreement between the natives' and the Western observer's interpretations of the known facts of the case, because these were inspired by conflicting metaphysical outlooks—a magical way and a Western way—metaphysics and a naturalistic metaphysics were in conflict here.

You may object that instead of raising the status of moral beliefs I have been lowering the status of factual beliefs, that I have been rebutting the empiricist's scepticism about the reasonableness of moral and political beliefs by spreading scepticism about the reasonableness of factual beliefs; but I do not think this is so. The curious fact is that philosophers have often required *moral* ideas to conform to standards of decidability to which *factual* ideas cannot possibly conform. I have been trying to show that the more modest and realistic standards which let factual beliefs through also let moral beliefs through. John Locke said that we should not "peremptorily or intemperately require demonstration, and demand certainty." Human understanding of matters of fact and of matters of morality is somewhere between infallibility and arbitrariness. Political beliefs which are the outcome of a comprehensive and well criticised system of beliefs are not thereby true; but they are more reasonable than political slogans.

SYSTEMS are unpopular today. System-builders have been accused of a sort of impiety, of trying to "bring the world into subjection to themselves by locking it up in a system." The charge of intellectual pride would seem at first sight to be misplaced because the more a man systematises his ideas the more he exposes himself to the humbling business of refutation. The more systematic a theory is, the more disciplined it can be. Science is thoroughly systematic. The opposite of a systematic explanation of a whole range of facts is an *ad hoc* explanation of a single fact, an explanation which explains nothing beyond the fact to be explained. This sort of explanation figures a good deal in the romances of children and primitive peoples. Why does the brook sparkle? Because it is happy. What evidence is there that it is happy? Alas, the only evidence is that it is sparkling. Being perfectly tailored to a single fact, an *ad hoc* explanation runs no risk of

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clashing with other facts, and can therefore be as free and imaginative a construction as you like. It is utterly unsystematic and therefore utterly undisciplined. And yet free and imaginative and undisciplined constructions are just what the classic systems of political philosophy are today supposed to be. Moreover, there is historical justification for this charge, so that the question arises: By what strange alchemy could these systems acquire the character of their opposites? The history of political philosophy provides several answers. Some system-builders have tried to immunise their system against all risk by declaring it to be a true *a priori*; but we can interpret it as a speculative theory. Some have tried to give their political conclusions a special force by declaring them to be deduced from premisses more certain than any merely moral or political proposition could be; such deduction would be an impossible feat; but we can insert the missing ethical premisses needed for the passage from non-moral premisses to political conclusions. Worst of all, some system-builders have tried to explain away in advance all possible objections to their system. Marxism, for instance, claims to show, among other things, why people will necessarily oppose Marxism; so that for the Marxist all criticism has been exposed and discredited beforehand. The deadly sin of the system-builder is to build a self-verifying mechanism into his system, so that from being magnificently exposed to criticism it becomes impervious.

Some political philosophers, then, impressed by the enormous riskiness of their undertaking, have reacted unfortunately by trying to insure their system against all risk. Today, the tradition of systematic political philosophy has fallen apart and no risks worth insuring against are taken. The moral philosopher and the political scientist are busy at safe pursuits, analysing moral language and analysing political machinery. There is a hum of industry but no angry or apprehensive voice is heard. Yet anger at injustice and fear of destruction are the two passions which, from the time of ancient Greece, have kept alive the great political debate which is now dying from inanition.

Jacques Prévert

Paris by Night

Three matches in the night lit one by one
The first to see your whole face
The second to see your eyes
The last to see your mouth
And then deep darkness to let me remember it all
As I hold you in my arms.

(*Translated by A. S. J. Tessimond*)

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LETTERS

"What's Wrong with Economics?"

ANYONE who has, like myself, been excited and instructed by Colin Clark's earlier pioneering work in the field of economics is bound to treat anything that he writes with special attention. Having attended to his essay on "What's Wrong with Economics?" (April ENCOUNTER) I was led to the conclusion that this was, to a large extent, an autobiographical exercise. I mean that it was in the main descriptive of Mr. Clark's personal attitudes on some of the ills of our time—inflation, high taxes, impediments to free trade. As he points out, statements of this kind may have substantial value: someone has to speak out against evil, so why not an economist? But he has chosen to dress up his views as a piece of objective economic analysis; a person unfamiliar with the subject might fail to penetrate the disguise.

Mr. Clark believes that the cure for the economic evils of our time is free trade, combined with lower taxation. His assertion is pretty sweeping: not only will they prevent inflation, but they also will raise efficiency and living standards to higher levels. In support of this latter contention he produces some evidence taken from "a recently published study" on Canadian and British productivity. This, I assume, is an article by Mr. J. B. Heath of Manchester University in the *Economic Journal*. It comes as something of a surprise to see what Mr. Heath actually says, after reading the conclusions which Mr. Clark draws from his study. Mr. Heath shows that a number of Canadian manufacturing industries were (in 1948) considerably more efficient than the British. He also points out that for many years before this the Canadians had been investing twice as much for each worker employed as the British, and that the high cost of labour in Canada was almost certainly a decisive factor in forcing the pace of investment. It still is. Because labour is relatively dear, capital equipment is relatively cheap. Moreover, businessmen are more likely to replace machinery quickly with more up-to-date equipment—thus making the most of each technological advance—in countries where big gains are to be made by saving expensive labour.

One further interesting point which Mr. Heath makes is that, on the basis of the evidence available, Canadian productivity appears to have been greater than British right from its industrial beginnings: at any rate, it was higher in the 1860s. This conclusion is very pertinent to Mr. Clark's sweeping historical thesis that free trade is the key to industrial efficiency. The British free trade system was gradually established from the 1840s onwards. By 1860 it was complete, and it remained intact for another half a century. Not so in Canada, where industries were built up to a high pitch of efficiency behind the protection of a rising tariff wall; nor in the United States, nor in Germany. During the last quarter of the 19th century the Americans and the Germans, who led the world in the techniques of building tariff barriers, caught up and surpassed the British in a whole range of metal and engineering industries, which were to be the foundation for the rapid development of technology in the 20th century. Such measures as are available show that British efficiency, measured in output per man, made a very poor showing in this period, compared with the new protectionist giants who were coming on.

Free trade certainly did not help us in this period. Indeed, it is arguable that it hindered our technological development. For while the German and American industrialists, who were feasting on the high profits made in their artificially protected markets, went ahead and invested more, the British businessman was exposed to the fluctuations in world trade. And this happened to coincide with a period, from the middle 1870s until the '90s, in which world trade was depressed. It is a fair guess that the average British businessman, having less security in his home market, was rather more shy about risking his money on extensions of plant and equipment than his competitors in U.S. and Germany. A secure market is a great stimulus to bold investment decisions. These were not taken by the British business community at this time. The sorry tale of British steel production, which by the early 1900s had fallen far behind both the German and the American, is characteristic of the failures of this period.

It is surely just as implausible to suggest that it was the burden of taxation—Mr. Clark's other bugbear—which caused our trouble. The reasons for economic growth and decline are in fact complicated and sometimes mysterious. They are as difficult to unravel as any other kind of historical process. Where, for example, is the common feature in the phenomenal economic successes of Japan earlier in this century, of Soviet Russia more recently, and of Western Germany since the war? Unrestricted competition is certainly not the answer. As to low taxation, it has not helped a country like Portugal to raise the general level of its productive efficiency. On the other hand, high-tax Sweden has achieved the highest standards of industrial efficiency.

Occasionally there is a gleam of light which illuminates the process—as, for example, the influence of high wage costs, to which Colin Clark

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refers in his essay. But he at once obscures the issue by translating it into "severe competition for . . . labour," which he says makes the Canadian manufacturer more efficient than the British. The truth is that if labour cost more because of monopolistic control of the labour market by the trade unions which eliminated competition altogether, the effect on employers, in stimulating better management and the more effective use of machinery, would be just the same. Indeed, it is hard to see in what sense it can be said that a North American employer has to compete harder for his labour than a British employer, in the face of the fact that the proportion of unemployed labour in U.S. and Canada has been two to three times as large as in Britain ever since the war. A simple refutation of Mr. Clark's model may be found in the fact that wages do not go down in North America when the competition for labour is sharply reduced during a business recession. But on the other hand, it would be wrong to suggest that high wages are necessarily beneficent in all circumstances. The combination of stable prices and high rates of economic growth in post-war Germany and Russia has rested on the comparatively slow rise in their wages over a number of years.

It is equally hard to follow Mr. Clark in his picture of Canada as a great free trade country where manufacturers expect that tariffs will be "reduced or abolished," whereas in Britain there is supposed to be confident anticipation that tariffs are going up. My own impression is that a large part of British industry is now basing its plans on the expectation of less and less tariff protection over the next couple of decades, as the European Free Trade Area, or something like it, comes into being. Whereas in Canada, as Mr. Clark knows, the demand for increased protection by the new secondary industries is very much a live political issue. It ought also, in fairness, to be recorded that when Britain proposed the creation of a complete free trade system with Canada last year, the Canadian Government rejected it out of hand. They subsequently gave their reason—that they were interested in diverting some export business at present done by the U.S. to Britain, but they had no interest in risking the loss of indigenous Canadian business.

Plainly Mr. Clark has overplayed his hand on his Canadian example. His initial thesis was that free trade and reduced taxation would check rising prices, and he was led on to assert they also necessarily produce the highest productive efficiency. If the latter is not true—and there is no serious evidence to show that it is—then it would follow that the Clark system would result in higher real costs per unit of output (because less efficiently produced) than some alternative: the present arrangement for example. And that might well lead to the damaging conclusion that a society would make itself poorer than it need be by insisting on this particular means of achieving stable prices. This is the nub of the problem. It is not to be denied that in conditions of boom and full employment, more competition through free trade helps, simply because in this way people and resources tend to be pushed into those uses where they are most effectively employed. But my own view is that Mr. Clark takes his universal boom altogether too much for granted. In a slump, as he would almost certainly admit, other methods, with less emphasis on competition and more on avoiding waste of idle resources, apply.

On taxation, Mr. Clark's argument is that very high marginal rates of tax on income reduce businessmen's incentives to be efficient and also prevent the small business from growing, so that it eventually challenges the inefficient established business. Again, there is something in this. But it is an argument against a particular segment of one tax—the top rates of surtax in this country—rather than against the system of taxation as a whole, which it is used to attack. It is common ground that certain taxes raise costs in the long run and that our tax system stands in need of reform—but it is Mr. Clark's own special ground that state-provided social services must be cut in order to lower the general level of taxation.

The truth is, I suspect, that this question of controlling prices, while maintaining full employment, is not so much an economic as an institutional problem. It is not hard to explain *why* prices rise to show what would have to be done about wages and so on, in any given set of circumstances to keep prices down. The practical problem is to arrange matters so that the trade unions, whose members have as much interest in stable prices as anyone, are enabled to shape their wages policy to this end. I do not pretend that this will be easy to arrange. But it is, in the main, a problem for political bargainers, rather than economic theorists.

ANDREW SHONFIELD

S.W.3

I THINK that Mr. Colin Clark, in your April issue, is mistaken in attributing the abolition of unemployment in Soviet Russia in 1930 to the compulsory direction of labour. Unemployment vanished because the floods of money pumped into enterprises by the inception of the Five Year Plans created an ubiquitous demand for labour. Direction was imposed only *afterwards*, in order to counteract the excessive turnover of labour due to the intense competition of rival enterprises for available workers.

A similar story can be told on a less dramatic scale of the post-war Labour government. Unemployment was eliminated by an increased flow of money, the origins of which are still not quite clear in this case. Then, as this flow produced undesirable inflationary side effects, the government stepped in to control circulation at various points. And here again, a public obsessed with the phantom of economic planning greeted (or execrated) these controlling measures as vigorous actions for "planning full employment."

In later years, both the Soviets and the British government have learned to sustain a sufficient

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circulation of money without any great overflow of it. So both countries could gradually abandon most of the previously practised restrictions on the spending of money. As far as Britain is concerned, the excitement about the supposed blessings (or crippling servitudes) of economic planning soon subsided; but this has not been the case in our relation to similar events in Soviet Russia. Though Russian textbooks of economics, and the current theoretical discussion among Russian economists, show how precarious has become the Soviet claim to have replaced commercial guidance of enterprises by a radically different "socialist" management, Western propaganda continues to accuse the Soviet government of having done precisely this. Our attacks may well prove to be the principal support of the government's socialist prestige to-day.

Western propaganda is twofold. It insists that the Soviet economic system is an embodiment of Socialism; and it goes on to assert that all the horrors of the régime are inevitable accompaniments of this Socialism. But it seems unlikely that this obscure warning has frightened away many people from supporting the Communist camp. Indeed, it has been music in the ears of the leaders of rebellious masses the world over. They heard themselves proclaimed to occupy the very position to which they aspired. They felt confirmed in their rôle as unscrupulous benefactors of mankind; as modern scientifically-minded revolutionaries, scorning liberal humanitarianism. Every violence to which they might yet be tempted was sanctioned here in advance, out of the very mouths of their enemies, in the name of Socialism.

We should try to assist Communist opinion in achieving a more sober assessment of its aspirations, rather than reinforce its illusory claims by our responding alarms.

MICHAEL POLANYI

University of Manchester
Manchester

Patting Hand Gets Bitten

MAY I thank Richard Wollheim not only for a most perceptive (and flattering) review of my *The Responsibility of Peoples* but also for stating clearly, indeed brilliantly, his objections to my approach to politics? Mr. Wollheim's criticisms are fundamental and strike, magisterially, the note that has predominantly sounded in other reviews of my book. This note is a peculiar blend of sympathy, even respect, and contempt—a sort of benevolent head-patting. "What a remarkably bright child!" I imagine a child rather dislikes having his or her head patted, however admiringly. Certainly an adult does.

It's not that I think Mr. Wollheim errs in his specific judgments; it's his conclusions I quarrel with. He is right, for instance, to detect an æsthetic tone to my political writings, and even a touristic detachment. I'm very fond of sightseeing and I won't deny that Marx was once my Baedeker to the radical world (though there really was a little more to it than that). I accept, with reservations to be noted later, his clever term, "Innocent," and I agree that as an Innocent, my reactions to politics have been mainly æsthetic (including in this term the use of the higher reasoning faculties) and moral. Art and morality are oddly joined: both involve value-judgments as to what is Good and what is Bad, and such judgments come down, ultimately, to one's own taste and one's own feelings, in rather dramatic contrast to the sphere of science; or of politics as Mr. Wollheim conceives it—if I read aright his sole, whimsical definition: "a system of outdoor relief." For some reason, it is nowadays considered frivolous to base any judgment on one's own taste and feelings; or at least to admit one is doing so. This I see as one effect of our scientised way of thinking. Mr. Wollheim is obviously not a "socialist scientist"; he writes too well, for one thing, good prose being suspect in well-scientised circles, as well it should be, as an uncontrollable injection of æsthetic bacilli into the pure, sterile test-tube of Research. But he is perhaps a philosopher of scientism, a fellow-traveller, so to speak, who thinks he ought to go along with the ideology regardless of his own inclinations—"Of course, *personally*...." At any rate, he thinks that "æsthetic" and "moral" are bad words and that politics is too serious a business to be left to those to whom such adjectives apply, while I think that

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the only serious aspect of politics is its relation to art and morality.

Mr. Wollheim defies anyone to say what I have against "Lib-Labism"—that is, modern liberalism of the *New Statesman* variety—"save that it is drab." What I have mainly against it is not drabness but hypocrisy. It doesn't act, as he thinks it does, according to principles, but according to prejudices; noble, worthy, and generous prejudices but still—prejudices. That is, a Lib-Lab in the 'thirties saw Stalin's Russia not as a more terrible version of the Czars' Russia but as a Stage in Progress, a Step in the Right Direction—though "of course, *personally*...." Similarly, with Science and Progress: Mr. Wollheim takes what he calls The Long View ("the gradual alleviation of suffering, of disease, of want, the advance of technology") as against The Short View (mine, which he sees as overly concerned with trivia like "the manufacture of bombs" and the spread of mass culture). Now really! The bombs—atomic, hydrogenic, God knows what other impeccably scientific varieties we'll be presented with—these fruits of Progress now offer us the shortest view of all, in fact, The End. Mr. Wollheim may be right, though it does seem unlikely, but I wish he hadn't invoked Condorcet, of all people, the Wooden Indian of the Theory of Progress, poor old Condorcet, who took such a Long View that he died in hiding from the Short-View Jacobins who wanted to cut his head off.

What makes it all puzzling is that I have always thought of myself as taking the long view, and of the Wollheimians as taking the short view. That is, I have tried to relate current events to human experience in general, to Reason and Ethics, as against the short-term interests of political doctrines. In fact, the political writing I look back on with least pride (and which, for the most part, I omitted from my book) was just that in which I subordinated the ethical-æsthetic approach to what Mr. Wollheim calls the long-term and I call the short-term approach, that is to the demands of a political programme. As, for instance, most of my writing for the Trotskyist *New International* and *Labor Action*, when, far from being "deprived of all the cues that theory and ideology alone can give," far from being without any "principle to support or direct" me, I was in possession of so many cues, principles, and directives—or perhaps better, was possessed by them—that I quite overlooked the most obvious facts of life, as that Lenin, Trotsky, and even Marx, even indeed their basic political ideas, were responsible, far more than I thought, for Stalinism.

Finally, I think Mr. Wollheim exaggerates my Innocence, a little. For instance, he seems to have missed the main point of my title essay, "The Responsibility of Peoples." He does take up two minor points—that "we" did terrible things, too, and that it wasn't a matter of the "national character" of the Germans. But the main point, stated perhaps unclearly but certainly often, was that in a mass society like Nazi Germany's (or our's or Soviet Russia's) it is intellectually absurd and morally unjust to make the general population responsible for crimes they are powerless to prevent—crimes, in fact, they didn't know about until after they were committed. (We Americans didn't know that "our" government was going to atomise Hiroshima any more than those Germans knew "their" government was exterminating the Jews—contrary to popular belief, the very existence of the Jewish death-camps was a closely-guarded secret; the first news reports leaked out only in the summer of 1944, when the ghastly "programme" had almost been completed.) My object in writing the essay, early in 1945, was not to "allot marks," not simply to simply express horror at the 'bare facts" (though that, too), but primarily to consider these things in the light of precisely what Mr. Wollheim finds lacking: 'some vision of society as it should be, some theory of how it works, some general estimate of what outweighs what.' This theory is stated in the essay: (a) "If we can conceive of a modern people as collectively responsible in a moral sense at all, then it must be held accountable only for actions which it takes spontaneously and as a whole, actions which are approved by the popular mores. It cannot be indicted for things done by sharply differentiated sub-groups." (b) "Modern society has become so tightly organised, sex rationalised and routinised that it has the character of a mechanism which grinds on without human consciousness or control.... More and more, things happen to people." (c) "In place of the rigid, unexamined customs which determine the individual's behaviour in primitive communities, there is substituted to-day a complex politico-economic organisation which is equally 'given' and not-to-be-criticised in its ultimate aims and assumptions, and which overrides with equal finality the individual's power of choice."

This seems to me neither "arbitrary opinion," "immediate reaction," nor "unaided feeling." Nor, for that matter, "like a man at a party." But don't let's quarrel, and let me, glass in hand, renew my thanks to Mr. Wollheim for the kind of review of my book I should have liked to have written had *he* been its author.

DWIGHT MACDONALD

New York City

Back Home to Mum

[*The author of the following letter is Director of Television Programmes for the Australian Broadcasting Commission.*]

I understand that Mr. MacInnes has a certain reputation for his analysis of the lives of West Indians in London. I am glad of this, because it may compensate for his singular failure to assess the Australian Myth in England.

A treatise such as Mr. MacInnes' (ENCOUNTER, March), which uses so many half-baked generalisations and so painfully strays from the truth, is difficult to deal with unless one tackles the problem seriatim. May I be forgiven for venturing along these lines?

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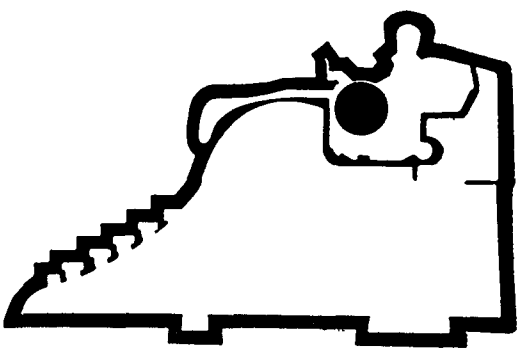

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1. I was in London in early 1956, admittedly for only three months. But I moved, necessarily, in officially-sponsored circles, and did not ever hear of *The Australia and New Zealand Weekly*.

2. It is the normal pitfall to talk or write generally about a "mere nine millions living in a continent of three million square miles." I wonder when Mr. MacInnes and the rest of his misinformed crew will appreciate that two-thirds of the three million square miles referred to is practically uninhabitable anyhow—at least until someone comes along who can turn desert and semi-desert land into pastures and arable fields.

3. Of course, Australia and New Zealand will be closest to the British Isles. Why not? They are of British stock anyhow; there is no major "coloured" problem (as in South Africa, India, West Africa, etc.); there is no such competition as the U.S.A. exerts with Canada, etc. Why on earth, then, should the "cord umbilical" be "entirely severed"? Mr. MacInnes' observations in this regard are almost childish.

4. Which reminds me. In the last twenty years of my life in city and country districts in Australia I have not ever heard the expressions "dekko," "By Cripes," "plurry," and "My Oath." Indeed, these are as much a reflection of the Australian way of life and expression, as the Wild West appearing on our newly acquired TV screens is of life in the appropriate regions of the U.S.A. in these present times. Mr. MacInnes has listened too much to the London expatriates. Even I, when I was in London, could have still dined out, had I wished, on the stories of crocodiles being repelled in hand-to-hand combat on five-storey landings during disastrous Sydney floods!

5. Yes, of course—Dick Bentley, Shirley Abicair, Bill Kerr, etc., etc. Only because opportunities being limited in Australia, they sought success overseas. But they aren't typical of normal Australian talent. They represent the *best* of it, in which field there is a limited Australian demand anyhow. So London is the answer.

(N.B.—Melba is never referred to as "Madame Melba" in Australia, always as "Nellie Melba." And secondly, politics and law happen to represent fields where there still remain ample scope in Australia—a fact which Mr. MacInnes could readily have ascertained had he taken the trouble to find out.)

6. Finally, let it not be said that I and my fellow Australians are not completely flattered by Mr. MacInnes' kind words. What Australian worthy of the name would not thrill to the prospect of our airmen "flying solo in crazy biplanes over shark-laden seas"; the thought of the Bush, drought, fire, and the "perpetually burning sun" (mad dogs of Australians!) and the conjuring up of brolga, dugong, goanna, etc. (but why not also didgeridoo, koala, bunyip, and the far-better known Emu?).

Somehow, it may all be designed to consolidate the lurking suspicion I had after my own visit to "Mum" that æsthetically speaking (after all we can be thrown the bones of sport and entertainment easily enough) we are still regarded as colonials. I would feel happier if only I could understand what Mr. MacInnes is driving at in the last paragraph of his article.

C. SEMMLER

Longueville
New South Wales

"Britain's New Class"

EITHER I have failed to communicate, or Mr. Braine read February's ENCOUNTER on a merry-go-round and then wrapped it round his fish and chips. Unless he is being deliberately perverse, he shows no signs of having made the faintest effort to understand what I was trying to say.

One of the starker things about my life, at present, is that I no longer have even a shred of sentimentality about any class—let alone the working class—and I really think it's time Mr. Braine stopped writing as though only three or four articulate people in this country have ever seen a man who works with his hands. I am just as tired, when I open a newspaper, of being strong-armed with this Voice of the People stuff as I am of being patronised by the Inner Sanctum boys. I also know, as well as Mr. Braine does, that almost all of us want a hundred times more than our fair share of the meat and gravy. In fact, I said so in my article. But he is trying me too hard when he justifies this attitude by reminding me that tripe comes before morality. I would have applauded Dickens it he'd said it—or even the Italian whose original remark it was—but I can only laugh when 19th-century anachronisms like Mr. Braine dig it up.

Anyway, what does it take to fill the average tripe—£5,000 a year? And just how long do we have to wait before it's filled and we can move on to morality?

Mr. Braine also has some pre-dodo things to say about violence. Apparently, for him, violence is permissible at the £12 a week level and immoral when you run your Jaguar out of an expense account. In my article, I made a very great effort not to identify Mr. Braine with his hero. I never imagined he would take off the mask himself.

No—I was making an attack on the intelligent New Men who squander their talents in fighting for the pickings in a Welfare State. I *know* the Joe Lamptons exist. I simply wish they didn't. Because one day they are going to sack some old, loyal employer in order to make room for Bert or Fred Lampton. And there is no point in smashing the old boy net if you're going to instal a new boy net in its place. What little justice there is in our society didn't infiltrate inside those little blue bags in packets of potato crisps. It got there because people put it there over the centuries, partly by struggle and partly by controlling some of their own intolerable lusts. And we have now come to a stage where the social struggle is just a vicious game we play to take our minds off the morality we prefer to do without.

FRANK HILTON

London, N.W.6

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PUTNAM

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BOOKS

Adam's Curse

"THE first shape of it came to me in a dream, but it changed much in the making": so Yeats, of his early play, *On Baile's Strand*. The process of "making" a Yeats poem involved innumerable drafts and corrections, and sometimes went on for years after its first appearance in print. He revised with particular thoroughness all the early work which he wrote before he was clear about his theme, or about his proper language; whatever he retained he rewrote, so that some of the poems as they appear in the late collected editions which are on everybody's shelves have quite properly been called "palimpsests" or "double exposures." "The Sorrow of Love" is a good example of this; opinion may be divided as to whether Yeats improved it, but it is certainly not any longer "early Yeats," despite the date, 1893, given in the collected editions. As the early Romantic themes dissolved into the more complex later mythology, and the dreamy language gave place (earlier than is sometimes supposed) to a more vulgar eloquence, Yeats tried to refine the old poems in his new furnace. "I have been busy with the Great Work," he says, "no lesser thing than that, although it may be that Athanor has burned too fiercely, or too faintly and fitfully, or that the *prima materia* has been ill-chosen.... The labour of the alchemists, who were called artists in their day, is a befitting comparison for all deliberate changes of style." The language is here characteristic of the period; yet whatever may be said of Yeats's "Symbolism," there was one extreme Symbolist position he did not accept—the doctrine of "æsthetic impersonality," expressed, for instance, in Mallarmé's eerie *Don du Poëme*, the view that the poet's rights in and responsibility for the poem end at its moment of birth. Yeats claimed to the end full rights over his, including the right to kill them if he could. (It now appears that he could not; the present editors print all his rejected poems in an appendix.) "One is always cutting out dead wood," wrote the poet; and his stitching and unstitching, the labour which he called "Adam's curse," went on throughout his life.

This new edition* undertakes "to note all the changes Yeats made in his poems in the course of their successive printings"—to record, that is, all the visible stitches. Its merits are huge and obvious. It tells us the history in print of all Yeats's lyrical poetry, whether or no a particular poem was admitted to the canon by Yeats himself (the criterion is the limited two-volume edition of 1949, upon the text of which this edition is based). It also reprints Yeats's prefaces, dedications, and notes. The main object, to achieve which the editors have constructed a complicated and efficient bibliographical machine, is the registration of variant readings. Their policy has been to record all, including merely punctual, variants; and although this loads the textual notes with trifles, it is hard to see how it could have been avoided. Yeats was weak on punctuation, but sometimes showed that he thought it important; and anyway completeness is essential to this kind of undertaking. Sacrificing everything to mechanical efficiency, the editors have numbered every line of the text; again they are justified, but one couldn't recommend this as a "reading" edition. The only criticism of method one might, hesitantly, make, is that it would not have been difficult to distinguish typographically in the collations between major editions and more ephemeral sources; all go indifferently by number. I have checked the collation of half a dozen early editions, and found no mistakes; this is the accuracy one would expect. There is a misprint in the text on p. 780, something that looks like a slip in the collation of poem 106, and a blind reference on p. 841. The mere thought of proofreading such a volume strikes terror.

It would be very absurd to complain that the book does no more than it is designed to do, but perhaps useful to distinguish clearly what this is. Yeats, knowing how much work lay

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* *The Variorum Edition of the Poems of W. B. Yeats*. Edited by PETER ALLT and RUSSELL K. ALSPACH. *Macmillan*. £6 6s.

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between the first impulse and the finished poem, began with hasty sketches, careless of detail. Many manuscript versions lie behind the printed poem; and some day such of these as are extant may become generally available. Without them no account of a poem's history can be called complete; but in the present state of knowledge of these manuscripts the editors were right to omit all reference even to such of them as are available. There is, as it happens, some small compensation for this necessary omission; many of Yeats's lyrics were first published in periodicals, and such poems were sometimes born prematurely, so that their development can be illustrated from a fairly early stage. "Among School Children" is an example; it appeared in *The Dial* and *The London Mercury* in August, 1927. In *The Dial* the fourth stanza began:

> *Her present image floats in to the mind*
> *What quinto-cento finger fashioned it,*
> *Hollow of cheek as if it drank the wine*
> *And took a mass of shadows for its meat—*

and though *wine* and *mass* may be misprints, the barbarous *quinto-cento* is obviously a genuine early try. It gives way instantly, in the *London Mercury* version, to "Da Vinci' finger so had fashioned it," and this persists in *October Blast* (1927). Only in *The Tower* (1928) does the familiar and seemingly inevitable reading supervene. All this the new edition records.* In the wonderful final stanza, however, where we might have expected evidence of labour, there is no variant of much interest. But this only means (as the present editors cannot tell us) that the last stanza "set" rather earlier, and the unpublished manuscripts show how arduous the labour was—the chestnut, for example, had a persistent rival in a hawthorn. As far as the later poems are concerned, it is only when there is a serious prematurity of publication that we glimpse the early struggles; thus the first published version of "Easter, 1916" contains, in place of the present lines 17–23, this:

> *That woman at while would be shrill*
> *In aimless argument;*
> *Had ignorant good will;*
> *All that she got she spent,*

* It is interesting that *London Mercury* has *histories* at the end of the fourth line of the poem; the rhyme suggests that this is correct. But it is replaced by *history* in all texts up to and including the definitive edition of 1949, the last revised by Yeats himself. The one-volume collected edition of 1950, however, reverts to *histories*, I do not know by whose authority. What reading should now be received is a nice question.

Lawrence Durrell

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FABER

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Her charity had no bounds:
Sweet voiced and beautiful
She had ridden well to hounds.

This kind of thing is normally not exposed to our view in printed texts. In short, the Allt-Alspach edition is more useful for revisions of the earlier work than the later.

Perhaps the severity of the editors has prevented their supplying some information which, though not essential to their object, might have helped the reader. They offer no external evidence as to dates of composition; and this might have been valuable in a book of which the main purpose is to provide materials for the history of a style. For example, the poem "The New Faces," which was published in 1922 but not generally accessible till *The Tower* (1928), was written in 1912, and withheld for purely personal reasons; so, more obviously, was "Reprisals," a poem of the Black-and-Tan period which appeared only in 1947. Chance will sometimes determine whether a useful piece of information is given or suppressed: thus, this edition will tell us that the separate poem called "The Choice" was originally an integral part of "Coole Park and Ballylee," because a version of the latter containing the former reached print; but there is no hint that the eighth stanza of "In Memory of Major Robert Gregory" was intruded late and awkwardly, again for personal reasons, though one may suppose that in certain circumstances Yeats might have deleted it. The rigidity of the scheme also forbids the inclusion of early versions which are found in post-humously-published letters (for instance, "The Three Bushes" in letters to Lady Wellesley, and many others in Wade's edition of *The Letters*). The commentary which the surviving editor must be so admirably fitted to write is doubtless a separate project; meanwhile, anyone who acquires this book would do well to place beside it the admirable *W. B. Yeats, Self-Critic* of Thomas Parkinson (California, 1951), little known in this country, and even omitted, unaccountably, from the new Supplement to the *Cambridge Bibliography of English Literature*.

For all that it cannot, of its nature, provide much that we should like to have, this edition is nevertheless a splendid achievement. If it seems strange to a non-devotee that a poet should so soon achieve a scholarly edition of such dimensions (Dryden, after all, is just about to arrive at the same point) he will have to reflect that Yeats, whatever else one may think of him, was at the centre of the poetry of his time, as Dryden was of his. However surprising the language, he speaks always for modern poetry; and all his labour is to get at the truth of our matter. He is the poet of our image: "the image—a cross, a man preaching in the wilderness, a dancing Salome, a lily in a girl's hand, a flame leaping, a globe with wings, a pale sunset over still waters—is an eternal act; but our understandings are temporal and understand but a little at a time." This edition is a record of that heroic attempt to repair the ruins of our temporal understanding.

Frank Kermode

The Devil's Commodity

Journey into Chaos. By Paul Johnson. *MacGibbon & Kee.* 15s.

Mr. Johnson's book gives an account of his observations on a recent journey to the Middle East, and a plan whereby a future Labour government may tackle the political issues of the Middle East. Plans for this area are legion; but so few of them have come to anything, and so many have rebounded on those who initiated them! Who would have thought before 1956 that Sir Anthony Eden, the patron of the Arab League, would venture to lay violent hands on a country which claims to lead Arabism? Who would have said in 1945 that the forcible Mr. Bevin would be led inexorably, step by step, in three short years, to an ignominious withdrawal from Palestine in 1948? Plans, especially in the Middle East, are treacherous things.

But whether they are taken up or not, Mr. Johnson's proposals rest on assumptions which command to-day a wide assent and which therefore deserve some scrutiny. Mr. Johnson approves the efforts recently made by oil companies to merge, by a kind of mimetism, into the local, Middle Eastern scene. They give work to local contractors, they employ local graduates, they use local resources. But they choose to do this, not for the economic reasons which usually impel commercial enterprises to such decisions, but as a kind of insurance again intemperate political attacks, to provide sweeteners for ill-disposed persons. They are an extension of public-relations activities, rather than an aspect of the normal symbiosis between enterprise and society. No doubt the companies themselves are anxious that their mimetic activities should be taken for genuine integration, but this only indicates the extent of the political difficulties which confront Western enterprises in backward countries. If such activities help to ensure less unpleasantness for the companies, then they have succeeded; if not, they have failed; and failure is not ruled out, since they may be taken as a sign of weak-

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ness and may arouse ambitions incompatible with the very existence of the companies. Tribute may be a necessary evil, it is not a social cement.

But the tribute, such as it is, Mr. Johnson finds insufficient. He proposes a plan whereby more of the profits of the oil companies—which he considers too high—should be extracted from them and set aside to help countries like Syria and Egypt, which have no oil. Now, Mr. Johnson is a Socialist, and this proposal might seem an orthodox application of the Socialist ideal of economic equality; but does it not do great violence to another Socialist tenet equally fundamental? For the monies which the oil companies pay to Middle Eastern governments are, purely and simply, rent; for a Socialist to approve of this, is to approve of a landlordism grosser and more arbitrary than any which Socialists are in the habit of condemning; it is to apply to Middle Eastern governments a standard infinitely more merciful and indulgent than that applied to British mine-owners. This is perverse, and the perversity is not diminished by arguing that oil money will promote the welfare of the masses. It may or it may not; but as the money is paid to governments or administered through them, its sure effect will be to increase the power and importance of these governments which have made of the Middle East the chaos into which Mr. Johnson has journeyed.

The truth is that the profits of enterprises such as oil companies which operate in these backward countries have come to be regarded as peculiarly illicit and illegitimate. Such a conviction is now invested with the status of a traditional prejudice; but it is a prejudice built on an *idée fausse*. This *idée fausse* has acquired enormous influence since Hobson set it forth in his celebrated tract on *Imperialism*. Hobson argued that there is an intimate causal connection between the activities of international financiers, the oppression of the working class at home, and the colonialist wars undertaken by capitalist governments. Merely to restate the argument is to see how absurd it is; to examine the tract in detail is to be appalled at its childish faith in statistics, its anti-Semitic insinuations, and its sob-stuff about Chinese village democracy and Papuan innocence caught in the clutches of monopolistic blood-suckers. It is due to the influence of these ideas that to-day there is a diffuse feeling, intangible and ineradicable, that prospecting for oil in outlandish places is to traffic with the devil, and that expiation has to be made by paying more and more royalties to some grim despot or some ramshackle ruler. It may be that in fact the oil companies will have to pay more, but it is as well to be clear that this is not in expiation of sin but merely by the force of circumstances; and that if all the profits

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from oil were paid out in royalties to the Middle East, it will advance the interests neither of the working classes here nor of world peace.

Elie Kedourie

The Fashion in Heroines

The Angel-Makers; a study in the psychological origins of historical change 1750–1850. By Gordon Rattray Taylor. *Heinemann.* 42s.

One of the more neglected aspects of the social history of recent centuries is the way in which popular literature concentrates at different periods on a certain type of character as the hero or heroine of its most popular books, plays, and so on. First there will be one Werther, or Byronic Hero, or Angry Young Man; the leader will be quickly followed by a crowd of imitators, jostling one another and exaggerating more and more the traits of the new type; and then, for some reason, satiety is reached, the type goes out of popular literature, and after a shorter or longer interval, a new type wins popular favour. While any of these literary modes are at their height, they are likely to have some influence on the behaviour and appearance of the young readers of the appropriate sex who identify with the current fashion. This influence is usually superficial, changes in dress, hair-styles, make-up, vocabulary; but where the model is dramatic, as for example the Byronic hero, a few individuals may copy the excesses of their literary models, with results which may be considered either tragic or comic.

During the first half of the 19th century, popular English literature produced a very odd type of heroine: the good woman who was so "spiritual" that she lacked any of the physical appetities or desires which characterised brute males or the coarser type of female; her influence was entirely ennobling and elevating, the Angel in the House, though her health was often poorly. At the height of her vogue, young ladies who chose this heroine as a model used, apparently, to eat secretly in their bedrooms before a dinner-party, so that in public they could display that disdain for food and drink which was considered appropriate to an angelic nature. Such extravagances were of course only possible to a very few young daughters of wealthy fathers; the models of the present century are adaptable to a much wider range of incomes.

This mode was a strange one, with its very exaggerated contrast between the characteristics of the two sexes; and Mr. Taylor had a good idea in thinking that the history of this literary fashion would be worth studying; but unfortunately he has almost completely failed in the task which he set himself. He has read widely, but desultorily, in a variety of documents published between 1750 and 1850, most of them not fiction, and has copied out some odd excerpts from them (with what accuracy, I should not like to say; the few I have checked differ in varying degrees from the original sources); and he has embedded these excerpts into a pseudo-sociological, pseudo-psychological, pseudo-historical amalgam or farrago which touches either life or literature only on the rarest occasions.

For one thing, Mr. Taylor does not seem to recognise the difference between life and literature. The fact that he is dealing with a literary fashion fades away after explicit recognition in the introductory pages; and novels, poems, or plays are treated as though they were evidence of the way contemporaries were living. But this is only done intermittently; in his unsystematic reading, Mr. Taylor did not think to analyse a sample of best-sellers at, say, ten-year intervals, to show to what an extent, or for how long, the type of heroine whom his book is meant to be about, was actually dominant; and he omits any discussion of such crucial figures as Jane Austen's Fanny Price or the earlier Dickens heroines. Instead we are treated to a series of observations on topics which, because they deal with events in the past, and only for that reason, can be dubbed historical.

Mr. Taylor thinks of history entirely in terms of clichés. The 18th century is "renowned for its immorality," the early 19th century is "so strait-laced that the word 'Victorian' has become a synonym for extreme rectitude." He discovers, with every appearance of surprise, that there were evangelical movements in the 18th century and brothels and pornography in the 19th. Nevertheless the argument of his book depends on the unproved assumption that there was a real change in sexual behaviour, rather than in literary etiquette, and therefore on ignoring the evidence that the clichés may not be quite accurate; the change from "immorality" to "extreme rectitude" is due to the rising influence of the "bourgeoisie" (never closely defined) whose orderliness, parsimony, and accumulation led to severe views on sexual morality, thus combining an extreme vulgarisation of the historical analyses of Tawney and Max Weber with a caricature of the psychoanalytic concept of the "anal character"; and it was the "bourgeoisie" who insisted that the feminine members of their groups should be (in real life!) angels rather than corporeal women.

All this nonsense is fitted into the Procrustes' bed of Mr. Taylor's private Key to the Scriptures, the hypothesis that different countries at different epochs tend towards either a male

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or a female super-ego, that they are either "patrist" or "matrist." This hypothesis has no scientific validity for the basic reason that it is not disprovable. Since there are only two sexes, and people normally have one parent of each, it is inevitable that the influence of one or the other should be dominant. What Mr. Taylor appears to be saying is that different epochs are more or less permissive in the amount of freedom and esteem they accord to the less strong members of the population—women, the lower classes, children, etc.; and by a circular argument he connects the more permissive epochs with romanticism in literature, decoration in the arts, and a "matrist" super-ego. It is difficult to excuse such a parody of some of the ideas of psycho-analysis.

Mr. Taylor writes as a rather squeamish, broad-minded humanist. He is very free with his reference to bosoms and bottoms, but when it comes to aggression he flinches away just as coyly as the Victorian writers did from sexual matters. "Attempts to describe the torments of the after-life, too painful to quote here, were common in the period." Quite a lot of the book is devoted to the evangelical movement; neither by temperament, by knowledge, nor by scientific discipline does Mr. Taylor show any of the qualifications necessary for dealing with this subject. It is pointless to write about religious beliefs, if you think religious beliefs are a psychological aberration and nothing more.

Nevertheless, Mr. Taylor has dug up some interesting or amusing quotations. Though I could not recommend anybody to read the book through, some entertainment can be had by looking at the footnote references, and then tracing them up to the text. The sections which are not between quotation marks can easily be skipped.

Geoffrey Gorer

Double Vision

At Home. Memoirs by WILLIAM PLOMER. *Cape*. 16s.

MR. PLOMER has, as all his writings have shown, the poet's look-out: all he sees, every one and every thing that crosses his lens, is registered on the sensitive plate of his perceptions, and simultaneously transmuted into the stuff of poetry or of fantastic comic extravagance. Landscape, town and country, beautiful, desolate, sinister, or drab, etch themselves on his receiving mind, to be transmitted with exquisite concision; he sees, feels, and communicates. Sussex, Cork, Hackhurst Down, Dover beach, Haworth under weeping skies, Phaleron bay in a shimmer of ecstasy, the sombre purlieus of Bayswater and Maida Vale, and the other sinister Victorian haunts which harboured him from time to time (they became sinister under Mr. Plomer's depraving and suggestive gaze, however innocent they may have been before his arrival on the scene)—all rise before us with a delicate economy of eloquence. People, too. He admits that people are his main concern; personal relationships have been more important to him than anything else, and have, he says, been a considerable distraction to his writing. They are, of course, the very stuff of his writing. They glint in and out of it, passing from his consciousness into ours with an added dimension, whether they are friends already familiar to us, or new. His portraits are witty, affectionate, and exact. Here are Virginia Woolf, E. M. Forster ("of all my unconformable friends, he has had, I think, the clearest, subtlest, deepest mind, the most generous understanding, and the most fruitfully revolutionary influence"), Christopher Isherwood, Anthony Butts, Stephen Spender, Joe Ackerley, Ethel Smyth (a brilliant vignette), Lady Ottoline Morrell, and many more. Only one portrait gives an impression of being a masterpiece of kindly restraint, with a hint or two emerging that he perhaps really saw its subject as slightly second-rate. But for the most part he can afford to let himself go without inhibitions. The dimension added to his acquaintances by his own wit is the novelist's gift to them; for he is even more novelist than poet. But it is the poet who reflects that "all the world is open to the senses, and more than the world to that extra sense that transcends them." It is that extra sense which doubles his vision, for he not only sees persons and things as they appear to him, but as they appear to themselves; he has that spring of sympathy which goes out in understanding, as well as the ironic slant which notes or creates enchanting oddities of demeanour, speech and act, so that at times we seem in the hands of a master puppet-showman or comic dramatist, at other times in those of an affectionate observer of humanity. There is a fascinating picture of Ethel Smyth calling on the Woolfs at Rodmell, with a side-glance at her music—

This high-spirited woman addressed herself to life with a gusto more often seen in her generation than in ours. If her sensibility had been as conspicuous as her energy, her music might have been as attractive as her enjoyment of life. Perhaps it is; but what I have heard of it has suggested to me collision and grappling irons

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and war cries, or repeated discharges of firearms in a Central European mountain landscape....

Literary friends form only one of Mr. Plomer's several environments. He slips without effort from Bloomsbury to the extravagant comedy of Anthony Butts, the frowsty, crime-haunted drabness of Maida Vale or Bayswater, or the limpid ecstasy of Greek sun and sea and human beauty. In all these settings, he immerses himself in the sensory and visual scene, yet stands apart from it as contemplator and correlator, viewing it and himself with civilised detachment. He is deeply committed to life, seldom to causes, except as each thing that presents itself commits him inevitably to sympathy or revolt. He is in this sense committed to civilisation, to the arts, to the battle against the cheapening and levelling of life. He is committed also to the aspirations, if not all the achievements of Christianity, and more particularly in its Anglican expression.

"If Christianity is to be believed in, it cannot rely on its rationality or much of its record. Christianity is an aspiration. It can be believed as a poem can be believed, because of its language and imagery, and for what they offer, promise, and suggest. They offer hope, a view of life, and a way of life....That it has given scope to weakness and wickedness is not the fault of Christianity but of those who have professed it. Not only is it used by evil as a pretext and a mask, but by mediocrity as a refuge.... To claim that the Church of England is the only admissible form of Christianity would be as narrow as to deny the merits of other than Christian forms of religion. But it is a cult with a peculiar appropriateness to a civilised disposition. There is wisdom and beauty in its function as a via media *between sectarianism and authoritarian rigidity and pretension....A writer may exist snugly enough in the shelter of agnostic indifference....But if he has any sense of the literature which he pretends to be enlarging, or of the rich variety of literary character, genius, and talent associated with the Church of England since the Reformation, let him ask himself whether, if he were to disregard it, he might not be risking literary as well as moral bankruptcy."*

It is this addiction to civilisation in all its aspects, together with untiring curiosity about people, delightful prose, and the unfailing spring of wit, that gives its quality to this discursive book, this disorderly kaleidoscope of memory and reflection, without chronological sequence or much shape. Perhaps its writer was lucky in his beginnings; he was, it seems, exposed to those who spoke of cricket as if it were a religion, and of Kipling as if he were a religious prophet (but are not these two theories incompatible?), and reaction from such nonsense may have added impetus to his flight from barbarism. Those of us who never had to suffer these inanities have sometimes fled less far, and with less sharp awareness.

Rose Macaulay

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Camus, Durrell, Wain, and Kavan

Exile and the Kingdom. By ALBERT CAMUS. *Hamish Hamilton.* 13s. 6d.

Balthazar. By LAWRENCE DURRELL. *Faber & Faber.* 15s.

The Contenders. By JOHN WAIN. *Macmillan.* 13s. 6d.

A Bright Green Field. By ANNA KAVAN. *Peter Owen.* 15s.

IN THE last and ultimate analysis every novelist has to be judged as a man who thinks. If, and how big an "if" this is in these thin-spread days, he can create characters in conflict, if he can establish time and place, if he knows the knack of hypnotising the reader to compulsively turn the page, he has passed, so to speak, only the preliminary tests. He can then

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communicate as a thinking man and it is for that we accept or reject him. It is for this reason that a book by Camus must head this or any other list. It is not necessarily because Camus writes better than Mr. Lawrence Durrell. Set them both to describe the desert and they might appear equally convincing; but it is because Camus' thought is of harrowing importance and Mr. Durrell's, for all his preface prattles about the theory of relativity, has essentially unimportant ideas. No one can read Camus' book without feeling he has added to his experience. It is worth every second of time borrowed from living or sleep or watching television. Its importance as far transcends entertainment as falling bitterly in love transcends an afternoon whiled away with an amiable mistress. It differs from the mainstream of contemporary English fiction as a bullfight differs from a game of shove-halfpenny on a wet Sunday morning in a saloon bar in Earls Court.

Sartre has said Camus is a classical pessimist, and that his pessimism is solar—if you remember how much black there is in the sun. If you also remember how much death there is in life I do not think you will find Camus a pessimistic writer, unless it is pessimistic to accept, with a sort of triumphant irony, human existence on its own unalterable terms. "There are words whose meaning I have never clearly understood," Camus has said, "such as the word sin. I know enough, however, to see that . . . if there is a sin against life it is not so much to despair of life, as to hope for another life and to lose sight of the implacable grandeur of this one." If you can sit in the Arctic London Spring, in a landscape composed of Lord Hailsham, the Archbishop of Canterbury, the marriage prospects of Princess Margaret, teenage religious skiffle groups on I.T.V., and the "Potting Shed," and not raise a great cheer of agreement and relief at these words, then *Exile and the Kingdom* is not for you. All I can say is that it is for me, and how much I wish that there was a contemporary English writer to speak with such clarity, humanity, and resolution.

Exile and the Kingdom is, in fact, a book of short stories. Some horrifying, some funny, some both, all good. In "The Guest," a schoolmaster in North Africa is brought an Arab murderer to house for the night and then take to the town where the prison, the law courts, and death await him. The schoolmaster is no executioner and after having fed his guest and courteously entertained him, he gives him money and points out two tracks across the desert. One leads to freedom, the other to prison and the town. The schoolmaster leaves his guest. Then from afar off, and with a heavy heart, he sees the Arab walking slowly on the road to prison. When he gets back to his isolated classroom, words have been scrawled on the blackboard: "You handed over our brother. You will pay for this." With Camus, treason and retribution are as insignificant as sin. His concern is with life, and in these stories it comes out shouting.

Balthazar is the second of a series of four novels planned by Mr. Durrell, of which *Justine* was the first. They are set in Alexandria, a city Mr. Durrell describes with great beauty and fearfulness and skill. I can think of nothing more vivid than the description in *Justine* of the camel who fell with exhaustion in the street and was hacked up like a great tree as it lay alive, being too unwieldy to remove to the slaughter-house. On a ride through the desert, a circumcision booth in the fair, a masked ball, a child's brothel, or an Alexandrian barber's shop, Mr. Durrell as a writer is a lovely craftsman. Unfortunately he has to people his effective landscape, and do so with characters who have to illustrate the theory of modern love and the theory of relativity and the other ambitious projects Mr. Durrell sets out in his preface. In fact the characters in both books are quite incredible and very dull, and although there is a good deal of copulation of various sorts we do not feel we are learning much about love. To make up for their exceptional lack of existence Mr. Durrell's characters have very elaborate names, as unexciting perfumes are glamourised by star-studded velvet containers. When he wants to give a Proustian ring to his book Mr. Durrell gives us a long list of these exotic names; but if Mr. Durrell is Proust then Mr. James Gould Cozzens is Honoré de Balzac. As a climax to this volume one of the male characters, temporarily being mistaken for the heroine Justine, dies in the following manner. He is asleep under a pile of overcoats in the hall at a party. More overcoats are piled on top of him and he is smothered. Finally a hatpin from the female hat of a male guest in fancy clothes is driven through his skull. In his preface Mr. Durrell says "nor could the City be less unreal." Ever weak in grammar, I am still trying to work out just how real this makes the city.

For me *The Contenders* has a great deal to recommend it. Mr. Wain has a readability I find compelling. *The Contenders* is a pleasant experience, like reading a streamlined, slightly jazzed-up, and more intelligent version of Arnold Bennett. I wanted to know what happened, at points I laughed aloud. At the end I felt both amused and slightly emotional when everything turned out so well. I do not think Mr. Wain has tried for more in this book, and what more can a reader on the look-out for good contemporary entertainment expect?

The theme of *The Contenders* is the old one

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about two hesitant provincials' attack on Metropolitan life, but Mr. Wain works it out very neatly, and his narrator figure, the fat, second-rate, contended boy on the local paper, is genuinely endearing. I found moments of real recognition in Mr. Wain's book: the surprise of finding a friend from your school days living in apparently contented sin with a woman you took to be his aunt; the horrors of a night on a sofa in a Chelsea mews; the weariness of notching up sexual adventures out of a nagging sense of duty —all this is very well done. And here is Mr. Wain on London at night,

"The streets are deserted. Except for the burglars robbing the houses, and the policemen looking out for the burglars, and the poets leaning out of their windows trying to read rhymes in the sky—just a few people like that. Even the whores are asleep. I am not accosted. I am not spoken to by anybody . . . when I find somewhere to live I'll be a Londoner, but to-night I am nobody, not even a ghost. The houses and the cathedrals and the offices and the theatres and the all-in wrestling arenas and the pubs—they're all just waiting. The drains are waiting down underneath the streets. . . ."

I like that. The city could not be more real.

And then Miss Anna Kavan. Well, she takes you back, back to the wartime and the silver barrage balloons flying over the Ministry of Information and buying *Horizon* at Zwemmers and *Penguin New Writing* and everyone standing about in "The Wheatsheaf" saying how good Kafka is and what about Lucien Freud. Miss Kavan's stories are in part allegorical, in part realistic. The realistic ones mean a little less than they say, the allegorical ones have no real application, so far as I can see, to anything at all. I am nostalgic about the past, a battered copy of *Transition* can mean a lot to me. But I failed to extract much pleasure from Miss Kavan. However this is Camus' month, and perhaps my standards have been raised hopelessly high.

John Mortimer

Green Klondyke

The Marches of El Dorado. By MICHAEL SWAN. *Cape.* 25s.

BRITISH GUIANA, Mr. Swan tells us, means for most Englishmen of the colony not so much the entirety of our enclave in the mysterious forests of South America, as a mere coastal strip two hundred miles long by ten miles deep. A depressing place, indeed, it sounds; peopled by an official caste almost proud of its ignorance of the interior, poor-whites, mission Indians, and the nondescript results of complex miscegenation, evangelism, and cane spirit. We read of the élite taking solace in gay pretence, such as an "1850 bathing-dress party" in Georgetown—where bathing is quite impossible—and of the dingy Hogarthian revels of the populace, the "sporting" Saturday nights imported from Victorian industrial England. Mr. Swan quickly escapes to the interior, with a wide provision of herbs bought in Soho to disguise the worst horrors of a cuisine based on cassava. Here he discovers that it is not only the Indians of the coastal belt, but all those reached by the tentacles of civilisation groping after them up the river valleys, who have fallen into decadence and lassitude. Parents lie in their hammocks when they can, or lounge about aimlessly, while their children learn to chant the multiplication table, to mouth the formulæ of an uncomprehended Christianity, and to drone The Ash Grove for the visitor's benefit. The forest sciences are lost to these people, while the mission handicrafts they are persuaded to produce are of sad vulgarity.

Travelling further with the author we survey

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a landscape littered with the debris of extinct gold-rushes, meet prospectors chasing eternally the mirages of their calling, come upon ghost towns where the saloons and bawdy houses closed down the same week they opened. Gold —or "pay dirt," as they say locally—is everywhere in the realm of the Gilded King, but it is very thinly spread. The puritanism of the American temperance sects (will they never learn that native beer protects against vitamin B deficiency?) is drily observed, and contrasted with the realistic morality of the mining companies who provide their workers with Indian concubines ("keepers," they are called), on a one between three sharing basis.

Finally the unspoiled hinterland is reached: the cliff-locked plateau of Mt. Roraima—the Lost World of Conan Doyle and *The Boys' Own Paper*; fabulous waterfalls, some of them three times the height of Niagara, and bearing such names as Art's, Jane's, and Princess Marina; sombre rain-forests, in which the beauty of bird, insect, and orchid is concealed from the sight of man in the unreachable leaf-canopy. Here the Indian can still hold his own, and responds—surely with our full approval—to the overtures of gift-bearing ethnologists in the employ of oil companies, with warning showers of arrows. Mr. Swan speculates as to whether a diet of maize instead of cassava might have brought out some latent brilliance in these people, permitting them to develop a civilisation comparable with that of their Mayan cousins in the jungles of Guatemala and Honduras. Perhaps not, but cassava or no cassava, they have at least survived as free men, whose extraordinary adaptation to their environment the author describes with fascinating detail.

This is an enticing and often entrancing book, written in the lively style of a born writer, and with the shrewd and selective observation of a connoisseur of remote places. It is certainly the most readable account to have appeared in recent years about this part of the world. Material which might have thickened the narrative is expanded in a number of valuable appendices—the wonderful myth of El Dorado, the Gilded King, the Caribs, the Carib language.

"The Marches of El Dorado," true to its title, is auriferous with matter, and yet, as artful travellers' tales should be, it is spun to hold the reader all the way along.

Norman Lewis

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About Our Authors

WAVERLEY ROOT has spent twenty-six of his 55 years in France. He began his career by writing literary, theatrical, music, and art criticism in New York. In 1927 he went to Paris where he worked successively for, among others, the United Press, *Time*, *Newsweek*, and the Mutual Broadcasting System. In 1945 he was decorated with the Légion d'Honneur for his writings on France. He is the author of a three-volumed work, *Secret History of the War*, published by Scribners in New York. His latest book, *The Food of France*, has just been published in the United States by Alfred Knopf, and is to be brought out here by Cassells in September.

FRANÇOIS BONDY is the editor of *Preuves* in Paris. His article, "Young Spain and the Old Régime," appeared in our July 1957 issue.... HARRY T. MOORE, professor of literature at Southern Illinois University, is editing the collected letters of D. H. Lawrence. His biography of Lawrence, *The Intelligent Heart*, was published by Heinemann in 1955.... DAN JACOBSON's most recent novel is *The Price of Diamonds*, published by Weidenfeld & Nicolson.... TOMMASO LANDOLFI's story, "Gogol's Wife," which appeared in our February issue, is doubtless remembered by most of our readers.... Our regular department, "From the Other Shore," is edited by LEOPOLD LABEDZ.... HERBERT PASSIN's reports on Asia have appeared frequently in ENCOUNTER. The subject, Mister Jayaprakash Narayan, is visiting England and Europe this spring. ... ANDREW SHONFIELD is Economic Editor of the *Observer*.... J. W. N. WATKINS is lecturer in philosophy at the London School of Economics.... FRANK KERMODE, author of *Romantic Image*, is lecturer in English at the University of Reading.... JOHN MORTIMER's plays, "The Dock Brief" and "What Shall We Tell Caroline?" have just been produced in London. ... ELIE KEDOURIE, lecturer in political science at the London School of Economics, is author of *England and the Middle East* (1956).

INDEX TO VOLUME X

In future Indexes will not be inserted loose in copies of ENCOUNTER. Readers will be invited to apply for each Index as published.

The Index to Volume X (January-June 1958) is now available and will be sent, free of charge, on application to ENCOUNTER, 25 Haymarket, London, S.W.1. A standing order for future Indexes can be accepted on request.

The editorial and business offices of ENCOUNTER are at 25 Haymarket London S.W.1. MSS should be accompanied by a stamped addressed envelope (English stamp) or international reply coupons, otherwise they cannot be returned.

ENCOUNTER is published by
Martin Secker & Warburg Ltd.
7 John Street, Bloomsbury, London, W.C.1.
for
THE CONGRESS FOR CULTURAL FREEDOM
104 Boulevard Haussmann, Paris 8, France

PRESIDENT OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
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The views expressed in the pages of ENCOUNTER *are to be attributed to the writers, not to the sponsors*

MADE AND PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN BY WILLIAM CLOWES AND SONS, LIMITED, LONDON AND BECCLES

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